History of the Sikhs

Vol. I
The Sikh Gurus, 1469–1708

History of the Sikhs is a five-volume series dealing with all aspects—religious, philosophical, political, military, social, economic, and cultural, and the contribution of Sikhism to world civilization, in particular to human rights, principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, and to the creed of democracy and secularism. The aim is to present a comprehensive view of the rise, growth and development of Sikh thought and action almost in every direction. The entire series is based on original contemporary sources in English, Gurmukhi, Hindi, Marathi, Persian, and Urdu known to exist in India and abroad.

This first volume gives the story of Ten Masters who provided leadership to the downtrodden people of the Punjab both in religious and political fields for about two centuries. Their aim was to remove the bitterness that had persisted between the rulers and their subjects for the past five hundred years. They wished to create a new society based upon mutual brotherhood, and freedom of thought, expression and action. It was under the circumstances almost an impossible task. But there is nothing like a dream to create the future. Utopia today, flesh and blood tomorrow.

Man's onward march requires that the heights around him should be ablaze with noble and glorious deeds of valour and self-sacrifice to serve as guiding lights. Such evolutionary and revolutionary models were furnished by Guru Arjan, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh, and his four sons—Ajit Singh (18 years), Jujhar Singh (14 years), Zorawar Singh (8 years), and Fatah Singh (5 years)—as well as by their numerous disciples like Bhais Mati Das, Sati Das, and Dayal Das.

The main features of this book are: A critical appraisement of Guru Nanak's *Janam Sakhis*, justification for celebrating Guru Nanak's birthday in November instead of in April, Guru Nanak's compositions, Mardana's death at Baghdad, how Amritsar developed into a Sikh centre, Guru Arjan's martyrdom, why Guru Hargobind took to militarism, Guru Har Rae's residence at Nahan, *Hukam Namas* of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh's formula of five into five, his literary works and *Hukam Namas*, Emperor Bahadur Shah's pious fraud, eminent personalities and instructions, impact of Gurus' teachings on Indian society, and why Jats became followers of Khatri Gurus.

Professor Hari Ram Gupta, had his education at Lahore. He was a lecturer at Forman Christian College, Lahore, Founder Principal of Vaish College, Bhiwani (1944), and Head of the Department of History of Aitchison College, Lahore. He served as Professor and Head of the Department of History, and Dean, University Instruction, Punjab University, Chandigarh. Later, he worked as Honorary Professor in the Department of History, University of Delhi. He has also been Honorary Professor of History at Dev Samaj College for Women, Ferozpur, Punjab.

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History of the Sikhs

Vol. I

The Sikh Gurus, 1469–1708

Hari Ram Gupta

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Munshiram Manoharlal
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To my ancestors
on whom the title of Bhure Shahi
was conferred by Guru Gobind Singh at
Tokah Durbar in 1685

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Preface to the Second Edition

The Sikhs are the most interesting people in the whole of India. They appear on the stage of life everywhere and in every walk of life as men of action. The hidden spirit and potential energy of a Sikh give him a peculiar dignity. A Sikh believes that God is always present with him, to help and guide him. This feeling has made him not only adventurous but also bold and fearless. He can dare anything and endure everything under the sun in the name of God, Guru and Granth.

The story of the rise and development of Sikhism is one of the most stirring and striking chapters in world history. It is a peoples' movement based on democracy, secularism and socialism, without any barriers of caste, colour or country.

The appearance of a great man is not an isolated event or a mere accident. A great man is invariably the product of his age. Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the founder of Sikh religion, was not an exception to this rule.

In Europe it was an age of Renaissance, Reformation and geographical discoveries. In Italy there was an outburst of activity in fine arts. The renowned masters, Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Michelangelo (1475-1564), and Raphael (1483-1520) made a lasting contribution. Colet founded the first Grammar School of St. Paul's in London in 1510. Erasmus opened the Corpus Christi College at Oxford in 1516. Martin Luther, a German professor, began Reformation in 1517. Colvin (1509-1564) took up this work in Switzerland. Columbus, an Italian, discovered the sea route to America in 1492. Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese, found the sea route to India in 1498. In 1519 another Portuguese, Ferdinand Magellen, made the first voyage round the world. The establishment of Tudor rule in Britain in 1485 heralded political awakening and ushered in the modern age.

India, with its great ancient civilisation and culture, could not remain unaffected. Hinduism, though ground to dust by the country's foreign rulers, began to assert itself in the most inoffensive form. It was the Bhakti movement of which Nanak was a prominent exponent.

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Its main object was to give hope to the suppressed Hindu community and to check forcible conversion of lower classes to Islam.

The Gurus laid emphasis on the worship of one God only through *simran* and *bhakti*. This has made the Sikhs the most vital community. The Sikh faith in the sword is a faith in sacrifice. The story of martyrdom of Guru Arjan, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh and his four sons together with thousands of other heroes, is one of the richest treasures in world history.

The ancient sages divided the life of a Hindu into four equal parts—(i) Brahmcharya ashram or student life, (ii) Grihastha ashram or householder, (iii) Vanprastha ashram or householder-cum-retirement or sadhu or life of preparation for renunciation and (iv) Sanyas ashram or life of complete renunciation or yogi. The Sikh Gurus gave only one stage to human life, living with parents, brothers, sisters and other relatives and then raising one's own family, viz. Griha stha ashram. The first five Gurus were the builders and the last five were the defenders of the faith. Guru Nanak was a teacher and master. Guru Gobind Singh was a comrade and leader.

The sacred book of the Sikhs was called *Pothi Sahib*. Guru Gobind Singh while ending physical guruship called it Granth. It is a combination of two words, Gur and Ant, meaning the Eternal Guru. The Sikhs named it *Adi Granth* or the original holy book. Guru Gobind Singh's compositions were collectively called the *Dasam Granth*. Adi Granth signifies Bhakti or religious devotion, while the Dasam Granth represents Shakti or living force of the Sikhs. As a matter of fact the Sikh character is a combination of bhakti and shakti. Shakti can be displayed not only in martial activities, but also in agriculture, business, industry and in other professions, as well as in mutual wrangles, dacoity and murders.

The special features of the ten Gurus are summed up as follows:

1. Nanak! may your name last till enternity,
 The True Guru and saviour of humanity.
2. Well done, venerable Bhai Lahna,
 For giving Gurmukhi as golden *gahna* (ornament).
3. You have made yourself *amar* (immortal), Amar Das!
 Your humility and organisation nobody can surpass.
4. Ram Das, your glorious Amritsar,
 Inspires with love every worshipper.
5. Praise, praise be to you, radiant Guru Arjan,

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For giving Granth and sacrificing *tan*, *man*, *dhan*.

6. Hargobind, in six centuries the first hero,
 To raise our determination from zero.
7. Har Rae, the lover of virtue and the good,
 You discarded your own son for falsehood.
8. Sweet, lovely and serene Har Krishan,
 Though a child, yet true to your mission.
9. Tegh Bahadur, firm in faith, great sacrificer,
 Purest pearl, illustrious and majestic martyr.
10. Matchless in word and in deed, O great leader of Hind!
 You completed the Holy Trinity—Rama, Krishan, Gobind.

The dead end of every century,
Has been crucial in Sikh history.
In 1499 Nanak commenced preaching.
In 1598 Adi Granth saw its beginning.
In 1699 foundation of Khalsa was laid.
In 1799 the Sikh monarchy was raised.
In 1897 the establishment of Khalsa College was a boon for the Sikh gentry.

Sikhism will emerge as one of world's great religions at the turn of this century.

The whole book has been thoroughly revised in the light of new researches and interpretations, and six new chapters have been added. The author expresses his gratitude to all those writers whose works have been laid under contribution. He is greatly indebted to his son-in-law Mr. S.L. Gupta for preparing the index, and to Professor T.M. Singh for help in reading the proofs.

Hari Ram Gupta

Firozpur
March 27, 1984

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Preface to the First Edition

Spread over nearly two centuries and a half, the story of the Ten Masters, given in these pages has one common characteristic—struggle. It was the struggle in pursuit of a new challenging idea, to create a nation of self-respecting people out of a down-trodden and suppressed society. There is nothing like a dream to create the future. Utopia today, flesh and blood tomorrow. Their aim was the elevation of man.

The men and women who took part in that struggle under the guidance of the Gurus from time to time had one common feature—courage. It was the courage of the mind which refused to accept the idea of defeat. It was the courage of the heart which enabled ordinary folk to endure imprisonment, torture and death. It can truly be said that they were defiant in defeat.

Man's onward march requires that the heights around him should be ablaze with noble and enduring lessons of valour. Deeds of daring dazzle history, and form one of the guiding lights. To strive, to brave all risks, to persist, to persevere, to grapple with destiny, to be faithful to oneself, to hold fast and to hold hard—such is the example which nations need to electrify them, and this period is full of such examples.

It was in 1931 that the author wrote *Dastan-e-Panjab* in Urdu in two parts. Next year he published *Sikh Dharam ki Phulwari* and *Khalsa ke Anmol Moti*, which carried a foreword by the renowned Sikh scholar Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha.

The author's venture in writing on such a delicate but inspiring subject after forty years of continuous work, also, has a common aspect of his life—faith. It is the faith that the Gurus put new life in the minds of a decadent people. It is the faith in one general fact, that the chief source of spiritual nourishment for any nation is its own past perpetually rediscovered and renewed for the education of every generation.

The new features of this book are: critical account of *Janam Sakhis* of Guru Nanak; Bhai Gurdas's testimony and other reasons for celebrating Guru Nanak's birthday in November instead of in April;

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Mardana's death at Baghdad; appointment of Masands by Guru Arjan and not by Guru Ram Das as stated by Macauliffe and others; Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi's role in the martyrdom of Guru Arjan; authenticity of Mohsin Fani's statement that Guru Hargobind remained in Gwalior fort for twelve years, his six battles against Shah Jahan—who had either forcibly converted to Islam or executed 4,500 Hindus of Panjab for marrying Muslim girls: Guru Har Rai's residence at Nahan and not at Thapal for twelve years; Mirza Raja Jai Singh's escorting Guru Har Krishan from Kiratpur to Delhi; meaning of the Khalsa; formula of five into five; Guru Gobind Singh's first letter to Aurangzeb from Raikot and the second from Dina; Guru's death as a result of Emperor Bahadur Shah's pious fraud; twelve eminent personalities and institutions, prominent sources of the Guru period; Guru Gobind Singh Marg and impact of Gurus' teachings on Indian Society.

The author is indebted to Principal, R.G. Bajpai, of Government Brijindra College, Faridkot, and Shri Gurbaksh Singh, Guide, Takht, Sri Keshgarh Sahib, Anandpur, for their kind perusal of the manuscript and making valuable suggestions for its improvement. His thanks are also due to Shri Bhagat Singh Bajwa and Mrs. Kusum Lata Bamba for placing at the author's disposal the rare collection of books preserved at Sikh Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Firozpur, to Shri Mohinder Kumar Kapur and Shri Gurbachan Singh Nayyar of Patiala, for reading out to him numerous Panjabi works, to his youngest son, Shri Ajay Kumar Gupta, for correcting the typescript and proofs, and to Miss Kanchan Jyoti for preparing the index.

Hari Ram Gupta

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Rebellion against tyranny is obedience to God.
—Francklin

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CHAPTER 1

Geographical Survey of the Panjab

The boundary and its effect

For a critical investigation into the history of a people or country it does not suffice to have acquired certain historical data, however, authentic, unless it is illuminated by a knowledge of geography of the country. Hence a brief survey of the Panjab of Guru period will not be out of place.

The Panjab derives its name from a Persian compound comprising the words *Panj* (five) and *Āb* (water), meaning Land of Five Rivers, which is watered by the Jehlam, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas and the Satluj. It has remarkably well-defined geographical limits, being bounded on the north by the Himalayan and Sub-Himalayan ranges, on the west by the Safed Koh and the Sulaiman mountains, on the east by the river Yamuna and Agra division, and on the south by Rajasthan and Sind deserts, a huge wedge of which reaches as far as the Satluj.

The Sulaiman range[1] is low and dry. The countries beyond it are rocky and rugged, and are hemmed in by mountains. Instead of plains, there are vast undulations of earth. As a consequence, they are unproductive. The inhabitants were poor and needy, and want compelled them to look to neighbouring and more fortunate countries for a livelihood. The Indo-Ganga plain, with its net-work of perennial rivers, abundance of agricultural produce, hoarded riches and all the luxuries of the times, coupled with a weak government, afforded them an ideal place to satisfy their needs, desires and ambitions. The Sulaiman, the only barrier in their way, allowed them an easy passage through its famous passes. The climatic conditions had also given them such strength as could enable them easily to overpower the luxurious dwellers of the hot plains of Northern India.

[1]The Sulaiman range is, from north to south, about 500 kms in length. Cf. Thornton, II, 254.

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The Bolan Pass[1] in Baluchistan was not the most frequented pass, because it led the invader, not to the rich plains, but to the vast deserts of Sind and Rajasthan which intervened between him and the fertile provinces of India. The suffocating dust-storms, the scorching sun, the burning sand, the scarcity of water and the want of food and fodder would send the invader to the grave rather than to his El Dorado. That accounts for the numerous foreign invasions of India across the Khaibar Pass.

Main natural regions and their importance

Leaving aside the Himalayan region with which we are not much concerned, the Panjab conveniently falls into three main natural divisions :

1. The Submontane Tract, stretching from the Yamuna to the Jehlam consists of low hills varying in height from 1,000 ft. to 2,000 ft., valleys called Duns and plain lying at the foot of the hills. It occupies the upper portions of the districts of Ambala, Hoshiarpur, Kangra, Gurdaspur, Sialkot, Gujrat and Jehlam. It is a fertile region, receives plenty of rainfall, and abounds in vegetation. The chief products are rice, maize and mango. Wild animals, mainly deer roamed about here in herds. This tract is covered by a vast network of streams which carry an immense volume of water from the hills to the plains in the rainy season, cutting the earth into deep gorges. It was easy of access to the dwellers of the plains of the Panjab. Consequently, this region served as the best hiding ground for the people of the plains, whenever they were threatened by the invaders or oppressed by the government. To the refugees this retreat provided not only security but also ample food and plenty of game.

2. The Eastern Plain Region comprises the country situated between the Ravi and the Yamuna. It is more fertile and rainy, and hence richer in products and population than the western part of the Panjab. In it lay almost all the flourishing towns of the time : Delhi, Sarhind, Jalandhar, Sultanpur and Lahore, seats of various governments. The southern parts of this tract, merging into the desert of Rajasthan, served as another rendezvous for marauders and freebooters. The

[1]The Bolan Pass "is not so much a pass over a lofty range, as a continuous succession of ravines and gorges, commencing near Dadur and fast winding among the subordinate ridges stretching eastward from the Hala chain of mountains." Its total length is nearly 90 kms and average ascent ninety feet in the mile. Thornton, I, 109-11.

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northern and central portions of the region were further subdivided into Majha and Malwa. The Majha is a high upland situated between the Ravi and the Satluj. In the north it was protected by the forest tracts of Gurdaspur and in the south by the arid and dreary desert-region of Naka. It is broad and fairly cultivated towards the north. In the south it contracts, becoming more and more of a desert, covered only with low bushes and at times with long grass, much valued as a pasture-ground for horses and cattle. This tract, devoid of water, was situated in the centre of the Bari Doab and was covered with a dense forest of *plās* and thorny plants.[1] This is why it became the home of the Sikhs who wanted to hide from their persecutors. Being nurtured in such natural surroundings, the Majha Jats grew into hardy warriors of an unusual independence of character.[2]

The Jats of this region were small landholders who tilled soil with their own hands. A rich diet, consisting of wheat, milk and butter, combined with an open air life, made them strong and sturdy. Theirs was a life of great simplicity, homeliness and contentment. The last element, however, gave way when the government assumed a policy of persecution against them.

Malwa in the local vocabulary is the name of the country lying between the Satluj and the Ghaggar. Malwa forms the watershed. This plain has, from time immemorial witnessed the most fiercely contested battles of Indian history. The foreign invader, having crossed the mountains and the river Indus, found no difficulty in marching across easily fordable rivers of the Panjab. But in this tract he was opposed by the Delhi monarch; and if the foreigner was victorious, the empire of northern India fell like a ripe fruit into his hands.

The greater part of this plain was sandy. It was watered by about a dozen streams[3] which come from the hills in huge volume during the rainy season, bringing down and spreading over the plains great quantities of sand and silt. Narrow in the east, it widens gradually

[1]Ahmad Shah Batalvi, 493.

[2]The first six Sikh Gurus had also long associations with this tract. Guru Nanak lived at Kartarpur on the Ravi, Guru Angad resided at Khadur on the Beas, Guru Amar Das passed his life at Goindwal also on the Beas, while Guru Ram Das laid the foundation of Amritsar, and Guru Arjan built a splendid temple eventually turning the place into the religious capital of the Sikhs. It was also the scene of the earliest battles of the Sikhs under Guru Hargobind.

[3]Ghaggar, Tangri, Markanda, Sarasvati and Kosla are important. *Tarikh-e-Makhzan-e-Panjab*, 79.

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towards the west. This region was another home of the Sikhs who followed a different line of action from that of their Majha brethren in the struggle for independence. The sandy desert provided them a secluded territory where they quietly pursued their course of life. Here, too, the Majha Sikhs often took refuge when they were driven away from their hearths and homes by their oppressors.

3. The Western Plain Tract stretches from the Ravi to the Indus. It was a dry, desert region, abounding only in thorny plants and tall grass. The cultivation was mainly carried on along the courses of the rivers. The river banks were covered with a thick overgrowth of vegetation which served as a shelter for thieves, robbers and outlaws. Multan was the only important place in this region.

Climate, rainfall and soil

The climate, except in the mountainous tract, is dry. In winter, the weather is cold and even frosty at night. The heat in summer is intense, and in many parts oppressive. The rainfall is deficient and uncertain. Most of it occurs in July and August and a little in December and January. The submontane region receives the heaviest rainfall, the Eastern Plain gets an adequate supply, while the Western Plain is almost rainless. The greater part of the Panjab plain is made up of alluvial soil deposited by its rivers. It is naturally very fertile and yields good crops with a little toil.

Forests

On account of heavy rains in the hills and the submontane region, there were plenty of natural forests. Thick jungles of *dhāk* trees covered the country at the foot of the hills. Besides, there were several forests of note. One of them was the Lakhi Jungle. It was situated in Bhatinda district, measuring about 24 kos[1] on each side. On the north it was bounded by the country of Rae Kalha (Jagraon), on the east by the province of Haryana, on the south by Bhatner, and on the west by the desert of Bikaner. It was noted for its fine pasture grounds, admirable cattle and excellent horses. The inhabitants of this place

[1]The *kos* was roughly speaking equal to 1½ English miles in the 18th century, as is clear from the series of pillars extended along the Grand Trunk Road, the distance between each two being a *kos*. Bakhtawar Khan in *Mirat-e-Alam* says that one royal kos is 5,000 yards, and each yard is of 42 fingers. As two fingers make an inch, the Mughal yard was of 21 inches, and one kos of 2,900 yards or 2,700 metres. *Elliot & Dowson*, VII, 103.

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were given to thieving, cattle-lifting, robbery and fighting, and the imperial officers were unable to punish or check them.[1]

Another forest covered the country from Karnal to Ludhiana.[2] In the doabs also there was a thick overgrowth of tall grass, reed and scrub stretching for miles along the river banks. All of these forests afforded excellent shelter to predatory bands.

People

The Panjab was inhabited by four main tribes. The Jats comprised the Hindus in the south-east, the Sikhs in the centre and Musalmans in the west. The Rajputs, both Hindus and Musalmans were distributed all over the province. They included the ruling tribes of Kangra and Jammu, Bhattis of the south and centre, Chathas of Gujranwala district, Syals of Jhang, Chhibs of Gujrat, Janjuas of the Salt Range and Pawars of the south-west. The real home of the Gujars[3] was the mountainous and submontane regions, but they had spread as far as the Ganga. Their stronghold was Gujrat. The Gujar was not a good cultivator. He was essentially a cattle-grazer. The Pathans, purely Muslim, were found in the whole of north-western Panjab. In the Jehlam district were the Gakhars, in the Salt Range the Awans, and the Khokhars in Shahpur and Jhang. The Kharrals were on the Ravi and the Daudpotras on the lower courses of the Satluj.

The Jats were in every respect the most important of all the agricultural tribes in the province. They formed the flower of Sikh armies, and as a people, they would in any country be deemed as fine specimens of the human race. Industrious, frugal, honest and simple, as they were, they proved admirable soldiers, inferior to none in India. Though without the dash and fanaticism of the Afghans, they were far more trustworthy in difficult circumstances. They were strong, tall and muscular with well-shaped limbs, erect carriage and strongly-marked and handsome features. The dry, vigorous and healthy climate of the province and the circumstances in which they were born and bred had all combined in making them a hardy, martial race destined to play a role unknown in the history of the province for nearly eight hundred years past.

[1] *Khulasat*, 63; George Thomas, 132-3.
[2] Sarkar, I, 185.
[3] "Almost all the thieves in Hindustan are of this tribe." Malcolm, i, 36 fn. 2.

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Rivers and their influence

The Panjab possesses a network of snow-fed rivers which have played the most important part in the history of the country. These rivers have not only added to the agricultural prosperity of the province, but have also been useful in various other ways. They have served as boundaries of subahs, sarkars and doabs. They were used as a means of defence, because in those days, when the building of bridges and provision of boats were no easy tasks for the invader, they served as a barrier in his way, especially during the rains when they became almost impassable. In view of this difficulty, the invaders followed a more northerly route to Delhi, just below the hills, where the rivers were narrow and the work of bridge-building easier. They invaded India in the beginning of winter and departed in March when rivers were at their ebb, thus enjoying the best weather of this country, whilst avoiding the worst season of their own homeland. On the other hand, forts were built on their banks, especially on the highway, to check the progress of the invader and to afford protection to the inhabitants of the place.

Because of the general state of insecurity the population was attracted to the rivers, along whose course a number of ferry-towns came into existence. The first ferry (*Shah Guzar*) on the Indus was at Attock,[1] under the protection of a massive fort built by Akbar in 1583. The famous Grand Trunk Road crossed the Indus at this point. There was another ford at Nilab,[2] situated at a distance of 35 kos from Peshawar.[3] The third ferry was near Kalabagh, and on crossing the river at this point the route led to Multan.[4] The most famous ferry on the river Jehlam was just below the town of Jehlam. The Chenab

[1]Attock comes from a Hindi word *Atakna* (to stop). The Indus was in Pre-Mughal times the last boundary of India and was not allowed to be crossed without a pass from the Kabul Government. At the narrowest spot it was 537 feet wide and from twenty to thirty boats were required to build a bridge at this point. The bridge was maintained by an association of boatmen to whom the government granted the revenue of a village for this service. They also received a small daily allowance in addition to the toll levied on passengers. Cf. Thornton, I, 60.

[2]Nilab means blue water, which name has been assigned to it from deep blue colour of the water of the Indus at this place. It is situated on the left bank of the Indus, about 80 kms below Attock.

[3]*Chahar Chaman*, 62b; *Tarikh-e-Ahmad*, 41; Bute Shah, 6a.

[4]*Tarikh-e-Ahmad*, 42.

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had two well-known ferries at Akhnur[1] and Wazirabad. The Ravi was crossed at Mirowal and just below the Lahore fort.[2] The Beas is said to have thirty-two[3] ferries between Mandi and its confluence with the Satluj, but only those at Wirowal, Goindwal and Rahila Ghat were famous.[4] The Satluj had four ferries at Rupar, Machhiwara, Ludhiana and Hari-ka-Patan.

They were also useful for trade purpose, because country boats could ply up and down these rivers carrying various goods from place to place, not only within this province but also to Sind. Timber was also brought down the rivers from the hills to the plains.[5]

The Doabs

The Panjab is essentially a land of the five doabs.[6] The Bist Jalandhar Doab, situated between the Satluj and the Beas though the smallest of all, surpassed the rest in population and agricultural produce. No part of it was desert. Grain grew here in such an abundance that it could meet the needs of the whole province, and was therefore rightly called the granary of the Panjab.[7] It consisted of 69 *mahāls*. The important towns were Jalandhar, Sultanpur, Kartarpur, Alawalpur, Sham Chaurasi, Tanda, Mukerian, Rahon and Nurmahal.[8]

The Bari Doab, situated between the Beas and the Ravi, is the largest of all the doabs. It consisted of 57 *mahāls* and contained a number of famous cities and towns like Lahore, Kasur, Multan, Amritsar, Jandiala, and Batala.[9]

The Rachna Doab, situated between the Ravi and the Chenab, con-

[1] Akhnur is situated a little above Jammu at the foot of the hills.

[2] *Tarikh-e-Ahmad*, 42.

[3] *Sair-e-Panjab*, I, 7.

[4] *Khulasat*, 76.

[5] Alexander Burne's *Travels*, I, 50.

[6] Doab is a Persian word, consisting of "*do*" (two) and *āb* (water). It means the land between two rivers that join. It is the peculiarity of the Panjab that all of its rivers join each other separately and then collectively. It is also interesting to note that in the case of the four *Doabs* the name of each is composed of the first letters taken from the names of the rivers by which it is enclosed.

[7] Ali-ud-din, 18b.

[8] Bute Shah, 7a-10b.

[9] The existence of the two largest cities of the Panjab in this *doāb* viz., Lahore and Multan, gave it an importance not possessed by any other *doab*. It also excites an interest as regards the Sikhs in having the Majha tract, the real home of the Sikhs, within its limits.

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sisted of 49 *mahāls*. On the whole it was a barren land and was not fit for cultivation. Its lower portion was called the Sandal Bar.[1] The important places of this doab were Wazirabad, Sialkot, Eminabad, Jhang and Maghiana.[2]

The Chaj Doab, between the Chenab and the Jehlam, consisted of 22 *mahāls*. This tract was devoid of water, and was covered with thorny plants and bushes. Among the places of note there were Gujrat, Shahpur, Bhera, Miani, Sahiwal and Mian Daulah.[3]

The Sind Sagar Doab is situated between the Jehlam and the Indus. It consisted of 48 *mahāls* of which 42 were in the Lahore province and the rest in Multan. The surface of this tract was partly hilly and partly desert. Water was scarce, population scanty and towns rare. The desert part was called the Thal. Attock, Hasan Abdal, Rohtas, Jehlam and Pind Dadan Khan were the places of note.[4]

Political divisions

The Panjab consisted of the two provinces of Lahore and Multan and the sarkar of Sarhind which was a part of the Delhi province. It is interesting to note that the influence of geographical forces working at the period was clearly indicated by these political divisions of the province. The chief concern of the Delhi kings in those days was to guard the north-west frontiers, in order to check the progress of the foreign invader. The Indus, which was the first natural barrier in his way, could be approached by the enemy from three different quarters. He could enter India either through the northern passes of Khaibar and Kurram, or by Bolan Pass in south-west, or through the delta of the Indus via Mekran. Consequently, three strong forts were built to guard these routes. Attock defended the northern, Sehwan[5] the central and Thatta[6] the southern passage. Some other base was also

[1]This tract now known as "Chenab Colony" abounds in smiling fields of grain and big towns.

[2]*Tarikh-e-Ahmad*, 42; Bute Shah, 26b-27b.

[3]*Tarikh-e-Ahmad*, 42; Bute Shah, 38a.

[4]*Tarikh-e-Ahmad*, 42; Bute Shah, 38a; *Chahar Chaman*, 194a.

[5]Sehwan, sometimes called Sewistan, is situated on the Indus nearly 160 kms above Hyderabad. For interesting details of the place see Alexander Burns's *Travels*, III, 52-9.

[6]Thatta is situated about 5 kms west of the right bank of the Indus, and 7 kms above the point where the eastern and western branches of the river separate. It is said that about the middle of the eighteenth century there were 40,000 weavers, 20,000 other artisans and 60,000 dealers in various departments.

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required to reinforce the garrisons in these forts in cases of emergency. The administrative centre could not serve this purpose on account of the great distance between the northern and the southern routes, especially in the absence of good roads and rapid means of communication. Hence in the Panjab two seats of government were established at Lahore and Multan.

Lahore was setuated on the Grand Trunk Road in the centre 500 kms from the imperial capital at Delhi, 475 kms from the Khaibar Pass, and about 330 kms from Multan. It occupied a safe position on the bank of the Ravi and commanded a rich and fertile territory. Roads to Kangra, Jammu and Kashmir trifurcated from this place. On account of its strategic importance, it became the chief military base with a storehouse, a stronghold and a great market.

Multan commanded an equally important position in the southern part of the province. It controlled the waters of the Panjab rivers and also the roads leading to Delhi, Lahore and Sarhind via Dipalpur and to Jaisalmer via Derwar, including the routes from the Tochi, the Gomal and the Bolan passes. Besides, it was connected with all the important places in the doabs of the province through the rivers. Its geographical position made it the most important centre of trade in the south where Panjab goods were brought through the rivers, and where they were exchanged by caravans for the commodities of Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Iran.

The province of Lahore extended from the Satluj to the Indus, 180 kos in length from Bhimbars[1] to Chaukhandi, and 87 kos in width. It consisted of five sarkars which contained 327 *mahāls* in 1759. The total area of the measured land in 1759 was 2,43,19,960 bighas and the total provincial revenue Rs. 1,59,81,111.

The province of Multan extended from Firozpur to Sewistan, 400 kos in length, and from Khatpur to Jaisalmer 180 kos in breadth. It consisted of 4 sarkars and 113 *mahāls* in 1759. The total area of the measured land was 44,54,207 bighas in 1759 and the total provincial revenue Rs. 45,90,786.

Alexander Hamilton who visited Thatta in 1699, calls it a very large and rich city about 5 kms long and two and a half broad. He states that 80,000 persons had, within a short time previously died of plague and that one half of the city was uninhabited. Thornton, II, 267.

[1]Bhimbar is situated 50 kms north of Gujrat on a small stream, which falls into the Chenab, on the route from Lahore to Kashmir, through the Baramgala Pass.

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Similar is the case with regard to Sarhind division of the Delhi province. It commanded a strategic position of great magnitude. It was flanked on the eastern side by the Yamuna and Sirmaur hills, on the west by the Satluj and the state of Bahawalpur, by mountains on the north and by the desert of Bikaner on the south. It was about 220 miles in length from east to west, 160 miles in breadth. It was the water-parting upland between the Indus and the Ganga valleys. The invader after crossing the Satluj could straightway march to Delhi without encountering any natural obstacle; but, of course, he had to measure his strength with the Delhi armies which, as a rule, advanced to oppose him. That is why the Sarhind plain has served as the battlefield of India from time immemorial. It was studded with strong forts, such as at Delhi, Hisar, Bhatner, Kaithal, Sarhind, Ludhiana and Machhiwara. It was the largest subdivision of the Delhi province and contributed nearly one-fourth of the total revenue of the province which is given at Rs. 2,64,65,892 by *Chahar Gulshan*. The sarkar of Sarhind consisted of 38 *mahāls*, and its total area of measured land was 1,57,86,388 bighas.

Delhi or Dilhi as the name implies was ideally situated at the heart of India to serve as the imperial capital. From very ancient times Delhi, with the exception of a few breaks, has been the chief seat of the government. It commanded the Indus valley as well as the Ganga basin. No physical obstacles separated it from the north-western frontier. As a consequence, the Delhi sovereign could easily send troops to the defence of this ever-threatened border. At the same time he was distant enough to be caught unawares by the invaders. The warlike Rajput princes of Rajasthan and Central India could be overawed and kept down by the presence of the imperial power at Delhi which was not far from their seats of government. Through the easily navigable Yamuna and the Ganga communications could be carried on with the provinces of Agra, Oudh, Allahabad, Bihar, Bengal and Assam. Besides, Delhi stood at the head of the richest and most populous provinces of India which the sovereign could command in person and thus could safely depend on his own material resources.[1]

[1]This section is based on *Khulasat-ut-Twarikh*, *Chahar Gulshan*, *Chahar Chaman*, Ahmad Shah's *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, Bute Shah's *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, Ali-ud-din's *Ibrat Namah* and *Historic Geography of the Panjab*, published in the *Muslim University Journal*, Aligarh, in the late thirties of this century.

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CHAPTER 2

Guru Nanak and His Times

Heaven and earth seldom combined to create such a fine habitation for man as the Panjab. Its mountains, hills and dales with snow-capped peaks, stately deodar and pine trees and fruit-bearing orchards are enchanting. Its fertile plains traversed by many rivers and streams are fascinating. Its smiling fields produce enormous crops of savoury corn, delicious wheat and fragrant paddy. Its animals, cows and buffaloes, have made it a land of milk and ghi. Its men, tall, robust and handsome, are known for their valour, grit and hardihood. Its women, elegant in stature, majestic in looks and tough in mind, have always been sought after by great kings and sovereigns. Kaikai, a Madra princess from Sialkot, gave us *Ramayan*, and Gandhari, a princess of Taxila-Peshawar region, gifted us *Mahabharat*. These two epics have been the mainstay of Hinduism throughout its periods of travails and turmoils. Rani Jindan gave us the British rule.

The actual Sikh homeland is the Majha, Doaba and Malwa. Majha is the middle part of the Bari Doab lying between rivers Ravi and Beas. It comprises the district of Amritsar and parts of the districts of Lahore and Gurdaspur.

Doaba implies Jalandhar Doab which is situated between rivers Beas and the Satluj. It consists of the districts of Kapurthala, Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur. Malwa region extends from river Satluj to river Ghaggar, containing the districts of Firozpur, Faridkot, Bhatinda, Ludhiana, Sangrur, Rupar, and Patiala. This stretch of land is approximately 300 kms long and 160 kms broad. The greater part of the Sikh population consists of Jats who are mostly agriculturists.

Political Background

Of all the Indian provinces the Panjab alone had the longest period of Muslim rule and suffered from the largest number of foreign invasions from the north-west. About 450 years before Nanak, Panjab

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had become an integral part of the Muslim world which extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Since the close of the tenth century upto the time of Guru Nanak successive waves of Muslim hordes had poured into India from the north-west. As many as about sixty[1] foreign invasions had taken place in five hundred years up to the times of Guru Nanak, thus on an average one invasion occurring every eight years. As the highway to Delhi and the rich Ganga valley lay through the Panjab, the greatest suffering was caused to the people of this province. The Turks and Afghans established their rule here. They governed through fear and force alone. They were mere brutes. They showed no mercy to the conquered people.

The Muslims had converted to Islam the entire population of Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunis, Algeria, Morocco and Iran in eighty years after the death of Prophet Muhammad. Later on Afghanistan, Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Province, West Panjab, Sind and Bangla Desh also succumbed to the sword of Islam owing to the prevalence of a strong Buddhist element there.

The iconoclasts believed that they would be able to achieve the same results in Hindu India as well. They committed horrible atrocities on Hindus. But they failed in suppressing the superior civilisation and culture of this country. The wit, wisdom and vitality of Brahmans saved Hinduism. In the course of eight hundred years they succeeded in converting only a small number of Shudras or some of the members of the fighting classes like Rajputs here and there. A poet says :

Yunān-o-Misr-o-Rome sab mit gae jahān se,
Ab tak magar hai bāqi nām-o-nishān hamārā ;
Kuchh bāt hai keh hasti mit-ti nahin hamāri,
Sadyon rahā hai dushman daur-e-zamān hamārā.

[The ancient civilisation of Greece, Egypt and Rome, all have disappeared from the world; But we still endure. There is something which does not let us die, Though for centuries time has been

[1]Alptigin, 1; Sabuktigin, 3; Mahmud, 17; Shihab-ud-din Ghauri, 10; (Multan 1175, Anhiwara 1178, Peshawar 1179, Lahore 1181, Sialkot 1185, Lahore 1186, Tarain 1191, 1193, Kanauj 1194, Khokhars 1200).

Mongols, 25; (Chingiz Khan 1220, Lahore 1250, Multan 1270, Prince Mahmud killed 1286, defeated by Jalal-ud-din Khalji 1292, in the reign of Ala-ud-din Khalji 12 invasions, Ghias-ud-din Tughlaq defeated them 1324, in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq 6 invasions, Timur (1398-99). Babar 5; Total 61.

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hostile to us.]
This is due to the recuperative power of Hinduism.

Timur's invasion, 1398-99

Timur, the robber ruler of Central Asia, invaded India 70 years before Nanak was born. He crossed river Indus at Attock in September, 1398. He marched along the western bank of Jehlam river and crossed Chenab near Multan which was reduced to ruins. He turned north-east and laid waste the towns of Dipalpur and Pakpattan. At Bhatner, Sirsa, Fatahabad and Hisar no Hindu house was left standing. Men were massacred or taken prisoners. After using women for grinding, cooking and raping most of them were beheaded in the morning before marching. The towns of Samana, Kaithal and Panipat went all to smash. At Loni near Delhi about one lakh Hindu men and women of Haryana kept as prisoners were put to death, and a vast area flowed with their blood. Timur himself admitted that every soldier in his army killed from 50 to 100 Hindu men, women and children in Haryana. Passing through Meerut, Muzzaffarnagar, Hardwar, Saharanpur, and causing wholesale destruction of human beings, cattle, crops and houses, he fell upon Jagadhri and completely destroyed it. Jawalamukhi and Kangra were razed to the ground, while Jammu was thoroughly sacked and burnt. He crossed river Indus in March, 1399.[1]

Jasrath, Ali and Faulad, 1400-1450

After Timur for about half a century Panjab knew no peace owing to the disturbances created by the rebellion of three notorious leaders. Jasrath Khokhar of Jehlam was a terror in West Panjab. He was so bold as to attack Timur's troops. Timur pursued him and captured him. He was taken to Samarqand from where he escaped. He came to the Panjab and renewed his exploits. He became more ferocious and followed the example of Timur in bringing the country to wrack and ruin. He laid waste Dipalpur, Lahore, Kalanaur, Jalandhar and Sarhind. Mubarak Shah ruled at Delhi from 1421 to 1434. His biographer, Yahiya of Sarhind, in *Tarikh-e-Mubarakshahi* recorded that Lahore was ruined by Jasrath to such an extent as it had become an abode of owls.[2] Jasrath was murdered by one of his wives in 1442.

[1] *Tuzuk-e-Timuri, E&D,* III, 389-477.
[2] *E&D,* IV, 54, 56.

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Jasrath's policy of desolation and destruction was taken up by Shaikh Ali of Kabul. His lawless activities extended upto the Jalandhar Doab for about a decade. Faulad Turkbachcha of Bhatinda established himself at Sarhind and subjected the whole Cis-Satluj region to his depredations.[1] Guru Nanak must have heard stories of terrible atrocities committed on the people of the Panjab by Timur in 1398 and by Jasrath Khokhar, Shaikh Ali and Turkbachcha later on. He must have seen with his own eyes traces of horrible devastation spread all over the province. Bahlol Lodi, 1451-89 and Sikandar Lodi, 1489-1517 restored order in the Panjab to a certain extent.

The kings

Guru Nanak lived from 1469 to 1539. During these seventy years he saw the rule of five kings. Bahlol Lodi, 1451 to 1489, Sikandar Lodi, 1489 to 1517, Ibrahim Lodi, 1517 to 1526, Babar, 1526 to 1530 and Humayun, 1530 to 1540.

Bahlol Lodi, 1451-1489

Under the Lodis the Panjab was divided into seven divisions each under a governor. They were Sarhind, Hisar, Sultanpur Lodi, Lahore, Bhera, Dipalpur and Multan.

During Bahlol Lodi's reign, Ahmad Khan Bhatti was the chief of Sind. He attacked Multan at the head of 20,000 cavalry. Bahlol Lodi sent a force of 30,000 horse under Umar Khan. At Multan he was joined by the governor.

Ahmad Khan sent a force of 10,000 cavalry under general Naurang Khan. A ball from a camelgun struck Naurang Khan and killed him. His mistress was present in the battlefield. She put on armour, delivered the assault and repulsed the imperial force. Fighting continued. After a number of engagements Ahmad Khan Bhatti was killed and his territory was annexed.[2]

Sikandar Lodi, 1489-1517

Bahlol's son and successor Sikandar Lodi appointed Tatar Khan viceroy of the whole Panjab over all these seven governors with headquarters at Lahore. Tatar Khan was killed in a battle near Ambala in 1485. Said Khan Sarwani succeeded him. In 1500 Tatar Khan's son Daulat Khan Lodi was given charge of the Panjab.

[1] W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 4.
[2] Ahmad Yadgar, *Tarikh-e-Salatin-e-Afghanan*, *E&D*, V, 5-6.

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Ibrahim Lodi, 1517-1526

Sikandar was succeeded by his son Ibrahim Lodi in 1517. Sikandar was cruel to Hindus alone. Ibrahim was cruel to both Hindus and Muslims. This upset Daulat Khan Lodi who made up his mind to throw off allegiance to Ibrahim Lodi.

Babar's first invasion, 1518

Babar, the Mughal King of Afghanistan and Khurasan, was anxious to conquer India. He invaded the Panjab in 1518. Travelling through the Trans-Indus country he captured Kohat, Bangash and Bannu. He advanced as far as Multan, and then returned to Kabul.

Babar's second invasion, 1519

In February, 1519, Babar again invaded Panjab. This time he crossed the Indus at Nilab, 80 kms south of Attock and confined his activities to the Sind Sagar Doab. He seized Bajaur, Jehlam, Bhera, Khushab and Salt Range. He saw many rhinoceroses on the banks of river Indus. They could not be shot as they suddenly disappeared in the brushwood. Babar seized Bhera, Khushab and Chiniot.[1]

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Babar's third invasion, 1520-21

In the cold weather of 1520-21, Nanak was returning home from Baghdad through Khurasan and Afghanistan. He noticed tremendous excitement throughout these countries. On having a call from Babar to invade India young men were thronging in Kabul with horses and arms. Nanak followed the traditional route via Herat, Kandhar, Ghazni, Kabul, Jalalabad, Khaibar Pass, Peshawar and Attock. At Hasan Abdal he was fascinated by a spring. Having visited Mecca and Medina, Guru Nanak had won the honorific title of *Hāji*. It was a rare honour in those days. The people of Hasan Abdal felt greatly honoured by the visit of such a holy man. They requested Guru Nanak to leave a symbol of his visit. The Guru stamped a facsimile of his palm at the spring which came to be called Panja Sahib. A grand gurdwara commemorates his visit to that place. Passing through Jehlam, Gujrat and Wazirabad, Nanak halted at Sayyidpur, 56 kms north-west of Lahore. He put up with his old disciple, Bhai Lalo, who detained Nanak for a sufficiently long time. Lalo complained to him about the oppression of the Lodi kings, their officials and Pathans in

[1] *Tuzuk-e-Babari, E&D*, IV, 231.

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general. The Guru replied that their dominion would end soon as Babar was on his way to invade India. The Guru said :

As the word of the Lord descendeth upon me, so I make it known. Brother Lalo;

With evil as his best man,
Bringing a crowd of sins as his bridal procession,
Like a bridegroom Babar has hastened from Kabul,
To seize by force his bride O, Lalo,
The wealth of Hindustan.[1]

As regards the sufferings of the people, the Guru observed

Kaya kappar tuk tuk ho si[2]
[Body and clothes would be torn to shreds.]

Nanak was still at Sayyidpur when Babar entered the Panjab. The Trans-Indus territory and the Sind Sagar Doab were already under him. He now seized Gujrat and Sialkot situated in the Chaj and Rachna Doabs respectively, and appeared at Sayyidpur on his way to Lahore.

Babar's atrocities

The town was mostly inhabited by Hindu traders and zamindars. They offered considerable resistance in order to save their lives, honour and property. This infuriated Babar. He ordered a general massacre of the people. All the young women were reduced to slavery. The older ones were forced to grind corn and cook food for the troops. The town was looted and then destroyed by fire. Nanak and Lalo were forced to carry heavy loads of looted property on their heads to the camp and then to grind corn.[3] The town sprang up again under the new name of Eminabad.

The barbarous treatment of prisoners in the camp, particularly of women, broke the tender heart of Nanak. The shock and pain were too acute for him to bear. In his four hymns collectively called *Babar Vani*, he says :

Thou, O Creator of all things,
Thou hast struck terror,
At the heart of Hindustan,

[1]Rag Tilang, *Adi Granth*, 422; *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*. 96-97.

[2]Gurbachan Singh Talib. *Guru Nanak*, 1969, 91.

[3]*Puratan Janam Sakhi*, 35; McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 44.

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Through the ruler of Khurasan;
Takest to Thyself no blame;
Thou hath sent Yama disguised as the great Moghal Babar.
Terrible was the slaughter,
Loud were the cries of the lamenters.
Did this not awaken pity in Thee, O Lord?
[Aiti mār pai kurlāne Tain ki dard na āiyā.]
Thou art part and parcel of all things equally, O Creator;
Thou must feel for all men and all nations.
If a strong man attacketh another who is equally strong;
Where is the grief in this, or whose is the grievance?
But when a fierce tiger preys on the helpless cattle,
The Herdsman must answer for it.

Treatment of women

The pitiable condition of captive women is described by Nanak thus:
The tresses that adorned these lovely heads,
And were parted with vermilion,
Have been shorn with cruel shears;
Dust has been thrown on their shaven heads.
They lived in ease in palaces,
Now they must beg by the roadside,
Having no place for their shelter.

When these whose heads are shorn were married,
Fair indeed seemed their bridegrooms beside them.
They were brought home in palanquins carved with ivory,
Pitchers of water were waved over their heads
In ceremonial welcome.
Ornate fans glittered waving above them.
At the first entry into the new home,
Each bride was offered a gift of a lakh of rupees,
Another lakh when each stood up to take her post in her new home;
Coconut shredding and raisins were among the delicious fruits,
Served to them at their tables.
These beauties lent charm to the couches they reclined on.
Now they are dragged away with ropes round their necks;
Their necklaces are snapped and their pearls scattered.
Their beauty and wealth are their greatest enemies now;
Barbarous soldiers have taken them prisoners and disgraced them.

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Few, some very few,
From this havoc return home,
And others enquire of them
About their lost dear ones;
Many are lost for ever
And weeping and anguish are the lot of those who survive.[1]

Regarding sex Babar made no distinction between Hindus and Muslims. Rape was committed indiscriminately. The women who suffered were Hindustani, Turkani, Bhatiani and Thakurani.[2]

Ibrahim Lodi took no action against Babar. Daulat Khan Lodi wished to remain on friendly terms with Babar, and did not stir out of Lahore. Babar suspected treachery. He did not cross river Ravi, and having established his authority over West Panjab, he returned to Kabul.

Babar's fourth invasion, 1524

Ibrahim Lodi came to know of the treacherous intentions of Daulat Khan. He invited him to the capital. Daulat Khan deputed his son Dilawar Khan to represent him at the imperial court. The young man was badly treated, and ordered to stay there. Dilawar fled away to Lahore.[3]

The cunning Afghan governor of the frontier province immediately turned to Babar, and invited him to invade India. Babar seized the opportunity without delay. He made great preparations and set out with the purpose of seizing the whole Panjab. A large part of the West Panjab was already under him. He reached Lahore without any opposition in the winter of 1524. Daulat Khan was then in the Jalandhar Doab. His officers at Lahore shut the gates of the city against Babar. Babar captured the city by storm and thoroughly sacked it. Nanak observed: *Lahore shahar, zaihar, qaihar, sawa paihar.* [Lahore city was given over to death and violence for four hours.][4]

From Lahore Babar went to Dipalpur. There he was joined by Daulat Khan Lodi. He requested the invader to instal him as his own deputy in Panjab. Babar did not trust an Afghan. He offered him governorship of the Jalandhar Doab only. Daulat Khan was indignant

[1]Rag Asa, *Adi Granth*, 417; *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, 87-88.

[2]Rag Asa, *Adi Granth*, 417.

[3]Niamatullah, *Tarikh-e-Khan Jahan Lodi*, *E&D* (*Susil Gupta*), 141; Ahmad Yadgar, *Tarikh-e-Salatin-e-Afghanan*, *E&D(SG)*, 37

[4]Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Guru Nanak*, 91.

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and fled away to the Shivalik Hills along with one of his sons Ghazi Khan. Dilawar Khan stayed behind and made submission to Babar. Babar put Dilawar in charge of the Jalandhar Doab. South-West Panjab with Dipalpur was given to another Afghan noble, Alam Khan also called Ala-ud-din Lodi. Daulat Khan's rebellion spoiled the plans of Babar to march on Delhi. He gave up this idea for the time being. He annexed Panjab up to the river Satluj. He appointed Mir Abdul Aziz the governor of Lahore. Sialkot was given to Khusrau Gokaltash. He then returned to Kabul.

Daulat Khan's supremacy

On the departure of Babar from Panjab Daulat Khan came out of the hills. He first attacked his son Dilawar Khan and established his own rule in the Jalandhar Doab. Then he advanced against Alam Khan and defeated him. He marched upon Lahore and drove away the Mughal governor. Sialkot was also seized. Ibrahim Lodi sent a force to subdue Daulat Khan, but it was also repulsed.

Alam Khan was ambitious to take Delhi and rule over India. He went to Kabul and made a secret pact with Babar. He wanted to conquer Delhi with the help of Mughal officers then serving in the north-western parts of Panjab. In case of his victory he agreed to surrender Panjab to Babar. On his return the Mughal officers joined him. Daulat Khan also lent him some troops in the hope that the conflict would weaken Delhi, and he would have a brighter chance to seize it. In the fight that followed, Ibrahim was victorious.

Babar's fifth invasion, 1526

These events compelled Babar to invade India once again in November, 1525. This was his fifth invasion. He collected a strong force equipped with artillery. Babar's position was vary strong as his artillery[1] was under two great experts, Mustafa and Ustad Ali. In India they used swords and spears, bows and arrows and were proud of their elephants. Babar crossed the Indus at Attock in the middle of

[1]Brig. R. Sawhny (Retd.) in an article reviewing the book *History of Indian Artillery*, says :

"Although Emperor Babar is popularly credited with introducing artillery into India in 1526, evidence is now available that it were the Bahmani Kings who first employed artillery in their wars against the Vijaynagar kingdom during the 12th century. *The Sunday Tribune*, April 30, 1972.

The Bahmani Kingdom and the Vijaynagar Empire both came into being in the fourteenth century. The artillery was used by the Bahmani kings against

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December. A little above Jehlam in the hills Babar came across many pools of water frozen into ice. This was the only ice he saw in India.[1] Marching along the foot of the hills and passing through Sialkot, Pasrur (Pursarur), Kalanaur, he advanced into Hoshiarpur district to Malot where Daulat Khan had taken shelter. This fort was situated 10 kilometres north-east of Hariana near Hoshiarpur. The fort fell in January, 1526. Ghazi Khan fled away. Daulat Khan was granted a pardon. In the fort he found an excellent collection of books by Ghazi Khan. Some of these books were given by Babar to his son, Humayun, and the rest were sent to Kamran at Kandhar.[2]

Between rivers Ravi and Yamuna people deserted their homes and took refuge in the jungles and hills. Babar says that all the villages and towns lay deserted. Even large cities were evacuated by the people in a single day so completely "that you scarcely discovered a trace or mark of population."[3]

Babar then marched to Rupar, Sarhind, Banur (16 kilometres east of Rajpura), Sanaur (7 kilometres south-east of Patiala), Samana (27 kilometres from Patiala), and halted at Shahabad (27 kilometres south of Ambala). His son Humayun conquered Hisar. Babar defeated Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat on 20 April, 1526. Ibrahim died fighting. Babar became the Emperor of India and laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire here.

Babar recorded, "I went there in person at the head of an army, five times in the course of seven or eight years. The fifth time, by the munificence and liberality of God, there fell beneath my blows an enemy as formidable as Sultan Ibrahim, and I gained the vast empire of Hind."[4]

Nanak's observations about Lodis

Kal kāti, rāje kasāi, Dharma pankh kar udiryā;

Vijaynagar in the battle of Talikot in 1565, twenty-nine years after the first battle of Panipat.

[1]Babar writes : "That day I drank spirits. Mulla Muhammed Parghari told us a great many stories. I have seldom seen him so talkative. Mulla Shams was generally riotous in his cups, and, when once affected he continued noisy and troublesome from morning till night." Leyden, Erskine and King, *Memoirs of Babar*, II, 161; A.S. Beveridge, *Babur Nama*, 452-53.

[2]*ibid*, 460.

[3]*Tuzuk-e-Babari*, *E&D (SG)*, 5.

[4]Ashbrook Williams, *An Empire Builder of the Sixteenth Century*, 215.

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Kūṛ amāvas sāchu Chandramā, Dise nahīn kah chaṛhiyā;
Hau bhāli bikunni hoi, Andhere rāhu na koi.[1]

[This Kal age is like a sword, kings are butchers, goodness has taken wings and flown away; There is pitch darkness. The rising of the moon of truth is not visible, I am bewildered. In the darkness, I do not find the way.]

In *Var Malhar*,[2] Nanak says:

Rāje sinh, muqaddam kutte.[3]

[Kings are tigers; their officials are dogs.]

In *Sarang* the Guru remarks:

Kali hoi kutte muhi khāju hoya murdār.

[In this Kali age men have faces like dogs that eat carrion.]

At another place, Nanak stated :

"There is no one who receiveth or giveth no bribes. The king administers justice only when his palm is greased.[4] Nanak then summed up :

"Sin is the king, Greed the minister, Falsehood the mintmaster,
And Lust the deputy to take counsel with.
They sit and confer together.
The blind subjects, out of ignorance, pay homage like dead men."[5]

On the fall of the Lodi kingdom Nanak observed:

A kingdom that was a jewel, was wasted by the dogs;
No one will mourn their passing.
Praise, praise be to God who bringeth people together and divideth them also.[6]

Abbas Khan Sherwani writes that during Ibrahim Lodi's reign, an Afghan noble had collected three hundred maunds of pure gold.[7]

Babar's rule

Babar established himself at Delhi. He appointed Kamran governor of Panjab. Babar was not allowed peaceful possession of this province. The Mandahars of the Nardak country embracing parts of

[1] *Adi Granth*, 145; Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, I, 170; *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, 82.
[2] I, 22-2.
[3] *Adi Granth*, 1288.
[4] Macauliffe, I, 5.
[5] Teja Singh, *The Growth of Responsibility in Sikhism*, 2.
[6] Rag Asa, *Adi Granth*, 36.
[7] K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, 23.

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Ambala, Karnal and Patiala districts under their leader Mohan revolted. In the first engagement they were successful, but later on they were defeated. Mohan was captured. About a thousand of his supporters were killed, and their houses destroyed by fire. Above a thousand of their women were distributed among soldiers. A tower of their skulls was raised to serve as a warning to others. Mohan was buried in the ground up to shoulders. His head was kicked and then pierced with arrows.[1]

The Panni Afghans of Hisar rose in revolt under their leader Hamid Khan Sarangkhani. They were defeated and cartloads of their heads were sent to Delhi.[2]

Then the Baluchis of Trans-Indus territory revolted. They captured Multan. The town was recovered after a long siege.

In 1529 Babar came on an official visit to Panjab. At Sarhind the Raja of Kahlur made his submission and offered Babar seven falcons and 120 kilograms of pure gold as a present. He was confirmed in his territory.[3]

At Lahore a grand reception was given to Babar. The whole town was cleaned and decorated with buntings and flags. Water was sprinkled on dusty roads. Three huge elephants, decorated in cloth of gold and ornaments, with golden bells sweetly tinkling and finely adorned horses conveyed the Emperor and his retinue to a garden. All along the road thousands of spectators gaily clad received him with loud clapping and shouts of joy. Gold and silver coins were scattered over the head of Babar to be picked up by poor people.[4]

Babar died at Agra on December 26, 1530. His son Humayun succeeded him. He remained busy in warfare outside Panjab. Having been defeated by Sher Shah Suri, Humayun fled away to Iran in June, 1540. Nanak was then leading the life of a preacher and farmer at Kartarpur on the banks of river Ravi.

Social Condition

The Hindu society was based on four classes, Brahmans for learning, Kshatriyas for defence, Vaishas-intellectual section for trade and commerce, physically strong people for agriculture, and Shudras for

[1] Ahmad Yadgar, *Tarikh-e-Salatin-e-Afghanan*, 125b, *E&D(SG)*, 60-61.

[2] Ahmad Yadgar, op. cit., 127b.

[3] Ahmad Yadgar, *Tarikh-e-Salatin-e-Afghanan*, *E&D(SG)*, 59.

[4] ibid. On February 10, 1525, Babar bestowed on Kamran the province of Multan also.

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all sorts of manual work. This division was commendable for harmonious working of society in olden days.

But this system should not have been static and rigid. It should have been flexible and adjustible to meet the needs of times. This flexibility it had lost.

The Hindus had become the most orthodox people on account of caste system. They considered their Muslim masters as *mlechhas* and completely boycotted them in social life. Besides, to save their religion and culture, they tightened the grip of the caste system so strictly as not to allow any change in their daily life. Alberuni's observations about Hindu society made 450 years earlier were fully applicable to Nanak's time. He wrote :

"According to their belief, there is no other country on earth but theirs, no other race of man but theirs and no created beings besides them have any knowledge or science whatsoever."

Thereupon Alberuni comments :

"If they travelled and mixed with other nations, they would soon change their mind, for their ancestors were not as narrow-minded as the present generation is."

About the superiority and complexity of Brahmans, Alberuni states:

"The Brahmins teach the Veda to the Kshatriyas. The latter learn it, but are not allowed to teach it, not even to a Brahmin. The Vaisya and Sudra are not allowed to hear it, much less to pronounce and recite it. If such a thing can be proved against one of them, the Brahmins drag him before the magistrate, and he is punished by having his tongue cut off."

The Brahmans were the scholars in Hindu society in those days. Alberuni says that Indian scholars declined to discuss literature or science with him because he was considered a *mlechha*. A thing touched by him was looked down upon as having been polluted, and was thrown away. They never tried to purify and recover it.

Some customs and practices of Hindus

The Hindus led an individual life. "The Hindus eat singly, one by one, on a table cloth of dung." This has reference to *Chauka* in the kitchen, which was plastered with cow-dung every morning.

The male population tried to look womanish. They did not cut any of the hair of the body. They let the nails grow long. They made their lips red by chewing areca-nuts with betel-leaves and chalk (lime). They used turbans for trousers. (This refers to *dhotis*). They wore articles

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of female dress, used cosmetics, wore earrings, arm-rings, golden seal-rings on the ring finger, as well as on the toes of the feet. In all consultations and emergencies they took the advice of women.

The Hindus married at a very young age. Therefore the parents arranged the marriage. No gift was settled between them. The man gave only a present to the wife as he thought fit. The marriage gift was given in advance. He had no right to claim it back. The wife could give it back to him of her own free will. Husband and wife could only be separated by death, as there was no divorce. If the wife lost her husband by death, she could not marry again. They married a stranger than a relative. The child belonged to the caste of the mother, not to that of the father. If the wife of a Brahman was a Brahman, her child was also a Brahman. If she was a Shudra, her child was a Shudra. [Baji Rao I's (1720-1740) children by Mastani were treated as Muslims.] The Hindus rode without a saddle. If a saddle was used, they mounted the horse from its right side. While travelling they had somebody riding behind them. In shaking hands they grasped the hand of a man from the convex side. They did not ask permission to enter a house, and took permission while leaving it. "I myself have witnessed", says Alberuni, "that in hunting gazelles they caught them with the hand." He further remarks :

"It is obligatory with Hindus everyday to give alms as much as possible. They do not let money become a year or even a month old." This accounts for the richest hoards being accumulated in temples.

Excellence in architecture

"In this they have attained a very high degree of art, so that our people when they see them, wonder at them, and are unable to describe them, much less to construct anything like them."

Comment

Thus India's seclusion and isolation, their false pride of superiority, complete lack of patriotism and nationalism, absolute neglect of the country's frontiers and passes, enormous accumulation of wealth in temples, effeminate character of the male population, their daily slogans of *Om, Shanti, Shanti,* and *Daya dharma ka mūl hai* and when faced with life's problems to retire to the hills and holy places after renouncing the world, opened the floodgates for the needy, greedy and aggressive neighbours from the north-west.

That the Hindus were defeated time and again is certain, that the

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Rajputs, bravest of the brave, fought heroically, but were repulsed, is true. They found shelter in the desert of Rajasthan and in the Himalayas. It was not the reason that the arms of Muslims were made of steel and those of the Hindus were of wood. The fact is that Hinduism is based upon individualism and not upon congregational system. The Hindus fought in individual groups one by one and never unitedly as one body.

About Hindu society Nanak remarks :

Decency and faith are far removed from them,
And Nanak, it is falsehood that filleth them all.
With sacred mark on their foreheads,
And their loins girt by the folds of dhoti,
With knives in their hands, they are butchers of the world,
They wear blue clothes to seek favour of the Muslim rulers,
And receiving money from barbarians,
They worship the Puranas ;
And they eat the goat slaughtered in the Muslim way,[1]
Yet they allow access to none to their kitchen-square.

Nanak further says :

Their subjects too are blind, without wisdom,
And like the dead, they dance to their tune.
The wise dance and make music and deck themselves as beauties.
They shout and they scream in confusion about their heroes,
And the foolish Pandits revel in arguments and cherish their set codes.[2]

About Kshatriyas in *Dhanasari* Nanak says :

Khatriān tān dharma chhoriya mlechh bhākya gāhi,
Shrisht sabh ik varan hoi Dharma ki gati rahi.

[Kshatriyas have forgotten their religion. They speak in the foreigner's language. The whole society is assuming the same character. Religion has lost its hold.]

The ulama exerted full pressure on their sultans to uproot *kufr* which meant Hindu religion, in particular idolatry. If it was not possible, then it was the bounden duty of Muslim kings and their Muslim officials to insult, disgrace, dishonour the Hindus who were the worst enemies of God and the Prophet.

[1]Rag Asa, *Adi Granth*, 472.
[2]ibid, 469, translation by Gopal Singh, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, II, 462.

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Shaikh Hamadani's twenty conditions for the survival of Hindus

Shaikh Hamadani prescribed the following 20 conditions on which the safety and security of the life and property of Hindus depended :

The Hindus were forbidden to :

1. build new temples,
2. repair old temples,
3. dress like Muslims,
4. use Muslim names,
5. ride on horses with a saddle and bridle,
6. possess any arms like sword or arrows,
7. wear rings and seals on their fingers,
8. sell or drink intoxicating liquor openly,
9. change their old way of dressing so that they could be distinguished from Muslims,
10. propagate Hindu beliefs and practices among Muslims,
11. build houses in the neighbourhood of Muslims,
12. bury their dead near Muslim graveyards,
13. mourn their dead loudly, and
14. keep Muslims as servants or slaves.

Hindus must have no objection to :

15. Muslim travellers staying in their temples,
16. keep Muslim guests in their homes for three days,
17. look after ease and comfort of their Muslim guests, and
18. conversion to Islam of their own people.

Hindus must :

19. show respect to Muslims, and
20. allow Muslims to attend any meeting or function of their own.

In the end he stated :

If Hindus did not observe any of these conditions, Muslims were at liberty to seize members of their family and their property, and to kill them.[1]

The effect of the Muslim rule on Hindus was most disastrous. The withdrawal of government patronage retarded their intellectual attainment. Their literary creativity ended. Their exclusion from political and administrative life paralysed their capacity and ability for organisation and management. The vast majority of them became hewers of wood and drawers of water and grass-cutters.

[1]*Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, de Bary, *Sources of Indian Tradition*, 489-90.

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Women

Women are generally repository of culture. But during this period they suffered most. Young girls were carried off by the members of the ruling class. This evil became so widely prevalent that the parents thought of three devices to save themselves from this ignominy. Firstly, Rich people murdered their daughters at birth. Thus infanticide became a well-established institution in the country. Secondly, early marriage was adopted by one and all. Girls at the age of 5 or 6 were invariably married. This ruined their health. They seldom experienced any period of youth and beauty. Due to frequency of child birth they never enjoyed good health. Thirdly, young women, both married and unmarried, were rather neglected. They wore coarse clothes. Toilet was ignored. The idea was not to let them appear attractive.

The male child was expected to become a helpmate to his parents. Hence the birth of a son was welcomed, and that of a daughter was looked down upon as a misfortune.

The widows led a miserable life. Without a husband they were hated by all the members of the family. She was blamed for her husband's death. The widow remarriage was not allowed by the Hindu society. She was either forced to burn herself alive with the corpse of her husband or was forced to cut her hair, wear dirty clothes, never to attend to toilet and do the meanest work in the household. She was not to indulge in songs and merriment, not to go to a fair or participate in family marriages and festivities. In many cases she was enticed by the Muslims, converted to Islam and set up as a prostitute. Women were confined to their homes. They were busy in domestic work. Their spare time was spent in spinning, ginning and Phulkari work, etc.

Economic Condition

A glimpse of the economic condition of the country and people can be had from the observations made by Babar. Five hundred years of misrule had impoverished the country and ruined the people. There was no development of towns, cities and villages. Babar found all of them ugly. Population was not increasing. The jungle approached the habitations. Robbers and thieves took shelter in them with ease. The plains were covered with thick brushwood. Everything wore the appearance of decay and deterioration.[1] The Dutch traveller De Laet

[1]Leyden, Erskine and King, *Memoirs of Babar*, II, 207-08; *Tuzuk-e-Babari*, *E&D(SG)*, 4-5.

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wrote in 1631 about Lahore: "In the time of the Pathan kings it was a mere village." He further says : "The road from Lahore to Kabul is infested by Pathan brigands; and although the king has established 23 guard stations of troops at regular intervals, none the less travellers are frequently robbed by these brigands, who in the year 1611 actually attacked and looted the city of Kabul itself.[1]

R.N. Cust describes the country round about the hometown of Guru Nanak thus :

"The county round Talwandi was wild, badly cultivated, and covered with brushwood : it is at the edge of the great jungle waste or Bar which occupied the vast space betwixt the Ravi and Chenab, containing many million acres of uncultivated land."[2]

Babar was impressed with the working of Persian wheels which he saw in large numbers in the districts of Lahore, Dipalpur, Sarhind and their neighbourhood. He gave a graphic description of them. Babar called the people pagans. The clerks of revenue, merchants, artisans and work people were all Hindus. They received their trade from their forefathers. For generations they had practised the same trade. The people were not handsome. They possessed no charm of friendly society. They did not mix freely. "They have no genius, no comprehension of mind, no politeness of manner, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their handicraft works, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture."[3]

He found the country people poverty-stricken and destitute. The lower classes all went naked. They tied *langoti* around their waist. One end of it was passed between the legs. They brought it up and fixed it to the string of the *langoti* behind. In towns there were gangs of dirty fellows called *divatis* or lamp lighters.[4]

There being no safety and security of person and property, agriculture, trade and cottage industry remained confined to locality to meet local needs. Communication with neighbouring towns was cut off. Money had become scarce. Bartering of commodities became the common mode of exchange.[5] It appears that Nanak in service at

[1]*The Empire of the Great Mogol*, a translation of De Laet's *Description of India and fragments of Indian History*, translated by J.S. Hoyland, and annotated by S.N. Banerjee, 51, 55.

[2]Extracts given by Sarjit Singh Bal in his *Guru Nanak in the Eyes of Non-Sikhs*, 96.

[3]Erskine and King, op. cit., 206-07, 241-42.

[4]ibid, 241-42.

[5]Moreland, *Agrarian System of Mughal India*, 68-69.

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Sultanpur under Daulat Khan Lodi received payment in provisions, cloth, oil,[1] etc. Anil Chandra Banerjee has calculated that in Ibrahim Lodi's reign, 1517-26, one Bahloli, equal to 2½ paise of today could buy 10 maunds of grain or 5 seers of ghi or 10 yards of cloth.[2] It is further recorded that a man, his servant and a horse could live on one Bahloli while travelling from Delhi to Agra 200 kms distant.[3] It shows the population was small, and there were few buyers of commodities.

The relations between Hindu and Muslim traders were cordial in business transactions only. The Hindus treated the Muslim merchants as untouchables, but they tolerated their religious views and allowed them to build mosques wherever they wished.[4]

Religious Condition

The Brahmans did not teach real religion to the Hindus and led them into superstition and materialism. Under their wrong direction Hindus began to believe that religion concerned only caste, the ways of eating, bathing and listening to *kathas*.

The absence of education led to ignorance. Idolatry became common. Every city, every town, every village or even a home had its own deity or gods. People looked to them for protection. Superstition gripped the minds of the people. Even trees, tombs, floods and snakes were worshipped. Temples were demolished by invaders and rulers alike. Mosques were built in their places with the same material. Abdullah wrote : "The Musalmans were dominant, the Hindus depressed."[5] Only three examples should suffice to illustrate the religious bigotry then prevailing.

Sikandar Lodi

During Bahlol's reign, his son Sikandar, born of a Hindu mother, proposed to kill all the Hindu pilgrims assembled at Thanesar for a bath in the sacred tank.[6] His historian, Abdullah, praises Sikandar Lodi as a king : "He was so zealous a Musalman that he utterly destroyed diverse places of worship of the infidels, and left not a vestige remaining of them. He entirely ruined the shrines of Mathura,

[1]Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, 4.
[2]Anil Chandra Banerjee, op. cit., 15.
[3]*E&D*, IV, 476.
[4]M.A. Muid Khan, *The Arabian Poets of Golconda*, 1.
[5]Abdullah, *Tarikh-e-Daudi*, *E&D*, IV, 439-40, 447, 475.
[6]ibid, IV, 439-40; *Tabaqat-e-Akbari*, I, 335.

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the mine of heathenism, and turned their principal Hindu places of worship into caravanserais and colleges." Their stone images were given to the butchers to serve them as meat-weights, this was specially said of the famous idol of Nagarkot[1] and all the Hindus in Mathura were strictly prohibited from shaving their heads and beards and performing their ablutions. He thus put an end to all the idolatrous rites of the infidels there; and no Hindu, if he wished to have his head or beard shaved, could get a barber to do it. Every city thus conformed as he desired to the custom of Islam.[2] In Panjab the celebrated temples of Kangra and Jwalamukhi were demolished by him and their idols given to butchers.[3] Law of blasphemy was strictly enforced. For any criticism of Islam capital punishment was awarded. Bodhan Brahman was executed by Sikandar Lodi for saying that "Islam was true, as was also his own religion."[4] Farishta says Sikandar Lodi compelled Hindus to read and write in Persian script.[5]

Babar

Babar proved no better. He exempted Muslims from the payment of stamp duties which Hindus alone paid.[6] No temples having been left standing in Panjab, Babar wrought his fury in other parts of the country. His officers demolished Hindu temples and constructed mosques in their places with the same material at Sambhal,[7] Chanderi and Ayodhya, and broke to pieces Jain idols at Urva near Gwalior.[8]

"Throughout the journey from the coast to Fatehpur (near Agra) the Fathers found the Hindu temples had been destroyed by the Muhammedans."[9] A very low status was assigned to the Hindus. While out of home they were required to put marks on their foreheads and dress to be distinguished from Muslims.

Akbar's viceroy of Lahore

Even during the reign of the most benevolent and tolerant Akbar, Husain Quli Khan, Governor of Lahore, had ordered that :

[1]Ahmad Yadgar, MS, 86; *Waqiat-e-Mushtaqi*, MS, 64.
[2]Abdullah, *Tarikh-e-Daudi*, *E&D*, IV, 14-15.
[3]*Tarikh-e-Farishta*, I, 281.
[4]ibid; H.H. Wilson, *Asiatic Researches* XVI, 55.
[5]Muhammad Hashim Hindu Shah, *Tarikh-e-Farishta*, Lucknow, 1865, 107.
[6]*Tuzuk-e-Babari*, II, 281.
[7]*Archaeological Survey Report*, XII, 26-27.
[8]*Tuzuk-e-Babari*, II, 340.
[9]Sir Edward Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mughals*, 28.

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"Hindus should stick patches of different colours on their shoulders, or on the bottom of their sleeves so that no Muslim might be put to indignity of showing them honour by mistake. Nor did he allow Hindus to saddle their horses, but insisted that they use pack saddles when riding.[1]"

They were forbidden to eat grain of superior quality, to wear rich apparel, and to ride on fine horses, in palanquins and carriages. In Dera Ghazi Khan the Hindus could ride only on donkeys. Forcible conversions were frequent. Slavery enforced officially and individually added large numbers of Hindus to the ranks of Islam. Prisoners of war were converted, and on refusal killed. Slave trade flourished and there were regular slave markets. Hindu wives and concubines were common. A large number of prominent centres of Muslim lore and learning had sprung up at Multan, Tulamba, Ajodhan, Lahore, Sialkot, Abohar, Sultanpur, Jalandhar, Sarhind, Samana, Shahabad Markanda, Thanesar, Panipat, Hansi and Narnaul.

Bhai Gurdas who lived during the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan in his V Var says that Hindu temples were destroyed and mosques were built in their places with the same material.[2]

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The Bhakti movement

The task of correcting the harmful customs was taken up by saints who appeared in all parts of India. They taught the people that true religion could be tested by good conduct and not by false beliefs. God helped only those who loved truth and service to human beings.

Bhakti means fervent devotion to God. The Bhakti cult was indigenous. It came down from ancient times. It adjusted itself to new conditions. The times of Guru Nanak were marked by political and social tyranny, corruption and narrow-mindedness. Communalism was reigning supreme. To improve this situation Bhakti movement was permeating through whole India. It was deeply influencing the spiritual and social life of Hindus. The main objects of its leaders were :

1. To give consolation and solace to the suffering humanity.
2. To remove the bitterness prevailing between the followers of Hinduism and Islam.
3. To interpret Hinduism in such a way as to make it more attractive than Islam to the lower classes which were amenable to conversion.

[1]Sri Ram Sharma, *Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, 14.
[2]*Var I*, Pauri 20.

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Hinduism was to be made a living force by preaching it in the language of the masses in witty prose and pithy poetry. The temples were thrown open to all classes. In their congregations no distinction was made between upper and lower castes. It led to liberalization of Hindu society. The Shudras and untouchables were recognised as important members of Hindu society. It was a defensive movement. Hinduism was to be defended against the onslaughts of Islam.

It is believed that Bhakti movement had reached Panjab through Nam Dev during the closing years of the thirteenth century. Baba Säin Das set up a centre at Gujranwala. His successors established branches at a number of places in Panjab and Jammu region. Säin Das and his followers preached devotion to God in both forms, Nirgun as absolute pervading whole universe and Sagun as a personal God. Guru Nanak might have heard about them during his journey. Further it is asserted that Kabir's verses had become popular in northern India including Panjab.[1]

The Hindu religion prescribed three ways to obtain salvation in this life and hereafter. *Gian Marg* offered it through knowledge of holy scriptures. In the existing state of society it was not possible, as the masses were illiterate. *Karm Marg* insisted on good deeds. This gave them no consolation, as good deeds got no credit, and were difficult to practise, and brought sheer disappointment and despondency. *Bhakti Marg* alone was possible. It consisted of four factors :

(a) passionate devotion or *shardha*,
(b) contemplation or *upasana*,
(c) praise or *stuti*, and
(d) prayer or *prarthna*.

Its method of salvation was open to all. This alone offered some hope for deliverance from their woes and afflictions. Hence this path was preached and practised. As the Muslims persecuted Hindus on account of idolatry and caste system, the saints of the Bhakti school preached against both these institutions. They declared there was only one God, and all human beings were His children. Thus they preached the principles of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. They asserted it did not matter if God was called Allah or Khuda by Muslims, and Ram or Parmeshwar by Hindus. Father, daddy and papa meant the same person. The real test was not in belief but in actions. Both *Quran* and *Puran* taught love of humanity. They

[1]Sharda, *Sufi Thought*, 55-56.

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emphasized that in the eyes of God there was no person high or low, superior or inferior, big or small, rich or poor. They insisted on singing sacred songs or hymns in the sincerest devotion and love for God. The spirit of self-surrender to the Lord and exercising no will of their own was prescribed for all seekers of peace of mind. All useless formalities and rituals were completely discarded. They roamed all over the country preaching to the people at village well, under a shady tree where people rested in the afternoon, at fairs and festivals, and on occasions of marriages and mournings.

Muslim Sufi saints also preached similar doctrines of peace and toleration, and through their message of brotherly love and friendly co-operation converted large numbers of Hindus of lower classes to Islam.

The earliest Bhakti leaders were Shankracharya, Ramanuja, Namdev, Jaidev and Ramanand. Among the most notable Bhakti leaders of Nanak's time were the following :

1. *Kabir, 1440-1518,* born at Banaras, a disciple of Ramanand, gave the greatest impulse to Bhakti movement, particularly in the region watered by the Ganga and its tributaries, viz., Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Kabir pleaded most strongly for Hindu-Muslim unity. "The Hindu resorts to the temple and the Musalman to the mosque, but Kabir goes to the place where both are known." He further observed :

"Kabir has taken the higher path abandoning the custom of the two. If you say that I am a Hindu then it is not true, nor am I a Musalman. I am a body made of five elements where the unknown plays. Mecca has verily become Kasi, and Rama has become Rahim.'[1] He declared that God lived in a simple, sincere and pure heart:

"O Seeker where do you search for me?
Look I am beside you.
I am neither in Kaba nor in Kailash,
Neither am I in rites nor in ceremonies,
Nor in yoga nor in renunciation;
If you are a true seeker,
You shall at once see me;
You shall meet me in a moment."
Nanak is said to have met Kabir at Banaras.[2]

[1]Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture,* 150.

[2]*Shri Kabir Ji,* published by Khalsa Itihasik te Vidyak Society, Lahore, 1917, 78-81, 113-16.

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2. *Vallabhacharya*, born in 1449, had a large following in Gujarat and Rajasthan. He laid great stress on *Sat* (Truth), *Chit* (Wisdom) and *Anand* (Bliss). He founded a cult which did not believe in strict morality and self-abnegation, but allowed self-indulgence and enjoyment of life. He called it the Krishna cult.

3. *Mira Bai*, a Rajput princess, born at Jodhpur in 1449, became a devotee of Lord Krishna. She exercised great influence on the common people through her devotional songs which are popular till today and are sung in all parts of the country.

4. *Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, 1485-1553*, flourished in Bengal. He was a great devotee of Krishna. Through his faith and devotion to God, he inspired among the people a great religious fervour. Through songs and *kirtan* accompanied by dance his followers went into ecstasy to see the vision of God. Hare Krishna tune which has become popular today was set by him.

5. *Tulsidas*, born in 1532, was a great exponent of Rama cult. He was the author of the immortal *Ramcharitmanas*, a book read and listened to by the largest number of Hindus with zeal and zest. He preached bhakti of a personal God incarnated as Rama.

All these reformers stimulated the people to get rid of priesthood, polytheism and caste system. They offered consolation by preaching that their misfortune was due to their misdeeds in the past life. They taught that a good life would bring them salvation hereafter. In Panjab disappointment, despair and depression prevailed everywhere. The work of giving relief to the afflicted mind of Panjabis was taken up by Guru Nanak.

Main characteristics of people in Guru Nanak's time

1. Nobody accepted the authority of the Vedas and the Shastras. Everyone worshipped only himself.

2. "Whosoever practises truth in this age loses; whosoever labours hard faces frustration; whosoever utters God's Name is maligned. These are some of the characteristics of the present age."

3. "Women love men for their earnings; otherwise it does not matter to them wherefrom they come, whereto they go.[1]"

[1] *Adi Granth*, 951, translation by Harnam Singh Shan, in his *Guru Nanak in His Words*, 95-97.

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The Muslim society

Khavand Mir in *Humayun Nama* mentions only three classes of Muslim society.

1. *Ahl-e-daulat* consisting of royal family, nobility and army forming the ruling class.

2. *Ahl-e-sadat* comprising ulama, qazis, muftis, Sayyids, lawyers, doctors and men of letters or the intelligentsia.

3. *Ahl-e-murad* including dancing girls, musicians, minstrels or the entertaining class, as well as the servants and slaves mainly converts from Hinduism.[1]

4. In addition to these there were peasantry and artisans who formed a great part of Muslim society.

The ulama

The ulama controlled the religious and social life of the Muslim society. They generally supported the rulers in their policy of intolerance towards the majority population in the country. Zia-ud-din Barani, the famous historian and scholar, admitted that they wrongly interpreted the *Holy Quran* to meet the wishes of the rulers. Ashraf agrees that the ulama did not lead the Muslim society for piety and virtue. The members of the Suhrawardi order openly favoured the government for the sake of riches. On account of their policy of flattery and untruthfulness, the ulama in general did not command respect. Balban called them liars. Amir Khusrau declared them hypocrite and deceitful.[2] The Muslim masses bribed them and Hindus hated them. In fact, they were responsible for the persecution of Hindus.

About the Qazi Nanak says :

Qazi sits on the seat of justice, tells his rosary and mutters the name of Khuda;

Taking bribes he deprives one of his rights;

On being questioned, he quotes chapter and verse.[3]

Sayyids, Shaikhs and Pirs

Sayyids were considered descendants of Prophet Muhammad. Hence they occupied a high social status. During his Indian invasion

[1]Ashraf, op., cit., 54.
[2]ibid, 70-71.
[3]*Adi Granth*, 722.

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Timur showed them special consideration. A Sayyid charged with embezzlement of government funds was let off by Sikandar Lodi without any punishment or fine or even the recovery of money. Shaikhs and Pirs were also greatly respected.[1]

Effect of Hindus on Muslims

Due to the large number of conversions from Hinduism, class division penetrated into the Muslim ranks.[2] The Muslims began to believe in astrology, evil eye and evil spirits, magic and spells. Mausoleums and tombs became places of pilgrimage. Some of the Hindu customs at marriages and festivals were also adopted by Muslims. For instance, the bridegroom was led on a horse or on an elephant under an umbrella with a party of jesters and fireworks ahead of him. Crackers were used on a festival day. Musical parties entertained the audience on the occasion of an *'urs*.

Disjunction between Hindus and Muslims

At the time of Nanak, Hindus and Muslims were completely separated from each other—religiously, socially, economically, culturally and politically.

Having lost in the battlefield the Hindus took shelter in the caste system. They declared the foreigners *mlechhas*. The Muslims continued their attacks unabated. Hindus pushed them back by complete social boycott. The Muslims resorted to forcible conversions in order to break the Hindu shell of caste. The Muslims failed to break it in spite of their inflicting continuous sufferings upon Hindus. Politically they became non-existent. Hindus and Musalmans became two different peoples opposed to each other.

Hinduism was a system of philosophy. Islam was simple in belief and practice. Believe in one God, in Muhammad as a Prophet and the *Holy Quran* as the word of God, and you are a true Musalman. The Muslims worshipped one God, Hindus many gods and goddesses. Muslims worshipped in congregation, Hindus individually. Hindus said prayers facing east in the direction of the rising sun. Muslims prayed facing west in the direction of Arabia where Muhammad was born and lived. Music was an essential part of Hindu worship; it was a taboo in Islam. Hindus greeted each other by Ram Ram, Muslims

[1]Anil Chandra Banerjee, *Guru Nanak and His Times*, 79.
[2]Ashraf, op. cit., 82.

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by Salam-o-alaikam and Wa alaikam Salam. There was social equality in Islam, while Hindus were divided into many castes and sub-castes. A Hindu was passive in character, a Muslim aggressive.

Hindus were largely monogamous, Muslims as a rule polygamous. Hindus cremated their dead, Muslims buried them. The greatest festival of Hindus was Diwali which was celebrated with illuminations, fireworks and sweets. Iduzuha, the greatest festival of Muslims, was celebrated by killing animals, particularly cows. Hindus killed animals with one stroke (*jhatkā*), Muslims killed them slowly like the sawing of wood (*halāl*). The sacred symbol of Hindus was Swastika, of the Muslims Crescent. Hindus prayed for peace with all human beings, *Om Shanti, Shanti,* Muslims desired to convert all non-Muslims to Islam by force or persuasion. A Hindu avoided eating and marrying with Muslims. To Muslims everything of Hindus was acceptable. Hindus bathed daily as a religious injunction, while it was not necessary for Muslims. A Hindu would leave his footwear outside living rooms and kitchens, Muslims wore them everywhere. Hindus used a separate vessel for latrines, Muslims used the same for washing and bathing.

Hindus wore sacred thread, Muslims practised circumcision. Hindus kept a tuft of hair on their heads, while Muslims trimmed their beards and moustaches in a certain fashion. Hindus wore dhotis tucked up between legs, Muslims wore it open at the bottom and called it *tahmad*. A Hindu buttoned his coat to the right, a Muslim to the left. Hindu women wore petticoat or *ghagra* and *saris* and Muslim women used *pajamas* or long drawers. The favourite colour of Hindus was red and yellow, and of the Muslims blue and green. Muslims would not wear red. Hindu women would draw a corner of their *saries* or *dhotis* over their heads and faces in the presence of elders and strangers, Muslim women used veils and *burqas* to cover their whole body.

Majority of Hindus were vegetarians, Muslims were meat-eaters. Cow was sacred to Hindus while Muslims liked its flesh most. Hindu meat-eaters would relish flesh of pigs, Muslims abhored it. Hindus kept fasts for a day or so in a month, Muslims for full one month in the year. Hindus ate individually, Muslims at one *dastarkhan*. A Hindu might use an earthen vessel, but he would never eat in it twice. Muslims used earthen vessels continuously. The earthen vessels of Hindus were striped, of the Muslims plain. The metal utensils of Hindus were of brass and bell-metal (*Kānsi*) or bronze, of the Muslims of copper. A Hindu would not eat without washing his hands and

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rinsing his mouth, Muslims had no such scruples.

Both hated each other, Hindus inwardly and Muslims openly. To the Muslims Hindus were *kafirs* or pagans, while Muslims were *mlechhas* or brutes to Hindus. The main characteristic of a Hindu was thrift, and of a Musalman pride.

In *Ramkali di Var* Guru Nanak says :

A Musalman feels proud of being a Muslim,
Without a proper guide he does not find out the true path;
He gropes in the dark,
He cannot enter paradise without performing good deeds.

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CHAPTER 3

Janam Sakhis of Guru Nanak

A. Hagiographies

Stories of Guru Nanak's birth and previous lives are called Janam Sakhis. They are not biographies but hagiographies which mean literature of lives and legends of saints. Guru Nanak did not dictate any Janam Sakhi of his own. His most devoted disciple and successor, Guru Angad, also did not compile any Janam Sakhi of Guru Nanak. Some of the Janam Sakhis were written by his admirers in the last quarter of the sixteenth century or during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. About a dozen Janam Sakhis have been written. Of these the following are well-known:

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Janam Sakhi of Bhai Bala

Bhai Bala is said to be one of the earliest companions of Guru Nanak. He was a resident of Talwandi, Nanak's home-town. He was younger than Nanak by three years. He was a Sandhu Jat. This Janam Sakhi was in great demand by the Sikh masses. Its earlier manuscript copies are available at Chandigarh, Patiala, Ludhiana and Patna. It was published at Lahore in 1923 by Rae Sahib Munshi Gulab Singh & Sons. On its first page it is stated that it was dictated by Bhai Bala. It was written by Paida Mokha.[1] It was read out to Guru Angad. On listening to the whole account, he observed that whoever would utter *Sat Bachan* (True statements) would go to heaven.

[1]Paida Mokha belonged to Sultanpur Lodi in Kapurthala district where Guru Nanak was in service. He was a Khatri by caste. Later on he settled at Dan Gali in Kahuta Tahsil of Rawalpindi district. His *samadhi* existed there up to partition in 1947. His descendants were living in the same tahsil at village Thoha Khalsa.

Khazan Singh, *History of the Sikh Religion*, 19; Trilochan Singh, *Guru Nanak*, 493.

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Karam Singh's views

The late Karam Singh, State historian of Patiala, in his Panjabi book entitled *Kattak ki Baisakh*,[1] totally rejects the authenticity of this Janam Sakhi as well as of its author. He tries to prove that Bhai Bala was a fictitious person and that his Janam Sakhi was bogus.

Is Bhai Bala a genuine person?

1. Karam Singh says that Bhai Gurdas has mentioned the names of various eminent persons such as Mardana, Daulat Khan Lodi, Baba Budha, but he does not speak of Bhai Bala anywhere.
2. Bhai Mani Singh prepared a list of famous Sikhs, but Bala's name did not appear in it.
3. Further, if Bhai Bala had been a genuine person, he would not have mentioned the following disparaging stories about Guru Nanak:

(a) In one story called 'Sakhi Sachche Saude di', Guru Nanak is made to say:
"In Dwapar Yugya, we worshipped God (Narankar). We completed our devotion (bhakti). Then some low craving arose in our mind (Bāsna ham ko bayāpi thi). This led to our birth in a low class family of an oil presser (Teli)."

(b) Another story is called 'Bhai Pharinde wali Sakhi'. Pharinda asked Guru Nanak:
"Have you forgotten those old days when we lived together in the house of Pran Nath Teli? Both you and I were real brothers. We had a sister also."
Nanak asked Pharinda their names and place of residence. Pharinda replied:
"Our sister's name was Sundari. My name was Sundar. Your (Nanak's) name was Parma. We lived in Sujanpur city. We then worshipped God so that we would take birth in a higher caste. You said that on account of your birth in a low caste Brahmans and Kshatriyas did not respect you. You sang hymns. I played upon a musical instrument. Now you are Nanak. Sundari is Nanaki. I have regained my rabāb (musical instrument)."

(c) Still another story entitled 'Jhande Bādi di Sakhi' says that

[1]Published at Wazir-e-Hind Press, Amritsar, 1912.

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Guru Nanak took various births for telling lies. He undertook numerous journeys in search of friends of the previous births to seek salvation with their help.

(d) 'Manjot di Sakhi' says that Guru Nanak was staying at Eminabad with Bhai Lalo. One day Guru Nanak was sitting in the bazar. Bhai Bala and Bhai Lalo were with him. They received an invitation to visit the house of Gopi Nath Kochhar. There Hayat Khan came with his family. On seeing Hayat Khan's daughter, Guru Nanak called Gopi Nath and said: "Bhai Gopi Nath ! Hayat Khan's daughter is in our trust (amānat)."

(e) 'Bibi Nanaki de bayāh' wali Sakhi says:
"Nanak was eighteen years old. One day Jairam Palta came to Talwandi. Nanaki, daughter of Kalu, was drawing water at a well (*Nānaki, Kālū di dhi, pāni bharne kuen te āi sī*). Jairam saw her and fell in love with her. He called on Rae Bular and said that he would like to marry Nanaki. Rae Bular called Kalu, father of Nanaki. Kalu demanded twenty rupees from Jairam as the price of his daughter. Jairam paid the amount and was married to Nanaki. The local gentry, both Hindus and Muslims, condemned Kalu for his bad deed.

(f) 'Bisar Desh ki Sakhi' states that Mardana asked Nanak how they would go to Bisar (possibly Misr or Egypt). Nanak replied they would sail on a fish which was 90 kilometres long and 13 kilometres broad (35 *Kos* and 5 *Kos*). Mardana was terrified at the sight of the fish. When the fish opened its mouth, Mardana began to tremble. Then the fish ejected from its stomach numerous kinds of delicious dishes to the delight and pleasure of Mardana.

These stories tried to show that Guru Nanak was born again and again owing to the effect of his bad deeds in the previous lives. This is opposed to the Sikh ideas. The Sikhs believe that Guru Nanak was sent by God to liberate mankind from sins and from the shackles of birth and rebirth. It is difficult to believe that Bhai Bala and Guru Angad would have spoken of Guru Nanak in such disrespectful terms.

4. Yet Bhai Bala's name occurs in some Janam Sakhis. Bhai Sarup Das Bhalla mentions his name once in *Mahman Prakash*. He writes:

Parabh sar da dekh manjur yahi kara,
Kartarpur nām chak ka dhara;

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Dharamsal haveli tahān banāi;
Matāji ko liyā bulāi;
Budha Randhawa Satgur ko mila,
Parabat want sewak ati bhala;
Bala Sandhu sewak nikka,
Bhagirath sukh dāi ji ka.

5. 'Vairowalwali Janam Sakhi' contains one story of Bhai Bala. It appears that Bhai Bala was a genuine person.

Bhai Bala's Janam Sakhi is spurious

Though Bhai Bala may be a genuine person, yet the Janam Sakhi attributed to him is indeed spurious for several reasons:

1. This Janam Sakhi uses the word Wah-e-Guru (*Bolo Bhai Wah-e-Guru*). This term came into use in the time of Guru Ram Das, and was never used during Guru Nanak's lifetime.

2. Bhai Bala's Janam Sakhi speaks of Eminabad. In Nanak's time the town was called Sayyidpur. It was destroyed by Babar. It sprang up again and was named Eminabad in the time of Emperor Akbar and Guru Arjan.

3. One story refers to Devlut Masand. As Masands were created by Guru Arjan, this Janam Sakhi could not have been written in the time of Guru Angad.

4. The writer of this Janam Sakhi says that it was written in Samvat 1582 Bikrami (1525 AD), 14 years before Guru Nanak's death. At that time Guru Angad had not come into contact with Nanak. Besides such stories could not have been written during the lifetime of Nanak.

5. Its language is not the Panjabi of Guru Nanak's time, but of the later period.

Conclusion

It appears that this Janam Sakhi was written after 1650 by a follower of Baba Handal Niranjaniya. In this Janam Sakhi Handal is shown as superior to Guru Nanak. The story says that when Nanak was born in the house of Pran Nath Teli, Handal was born in the family of a Pandit. In the previous life Handal was the son-in-law of Raja Janak, and Nanak held him in high esteem. Nanak's name was Sundar and Handal's Arjan Mal.

Handal was a Jat who became a disciple of Guru Amar Das. Handal died in 1648 AD. He was succeeded by Baba Bidhi Chand. He

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had a Muslim wife. He founded a sect called Handalis. This Janam Sakhi seems to have been written in his time.

The latest and most comprehensive work on Guru Nanak is that of Dr. Trilochan Singh.[1]

His observations are:

1. "The Handalis apparently had sufficient influence to destroy nearly all the older accounts of the life of Guru Nanak."[2]

2. The author emphatically declares that Bhai Bala was a genuine person. He gives the following reasons in proof of his assertion:

(i) *Mahman Prakash* and Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sakhi contain Bhai Bala's name in many places.

(ii) Bhai Bala's family still lives (in 1969) at Nankana Sahib.

(iii) Bala's tomb (*Samadhi*) exists at Khadur.

(iv) Bhai Behlo's *Suchak Prasang Guru ka* written at the time of *Adi Granth* says:

"Bala discarded his body there,
At the holy city of Khadur,
Angad, the Master, performed the rites,
Graciously with his own hands."[3]

3. Dr. Trilochan Singh declares that Bala's Janam Sakhi is "authentic, but it was first corrupted by the Minas, or Meharban and his followers. Then during the lifetime of Guru Gobind Singh by the Handaliyas, and then by the printers who in their zeal to give a simple and all inclusive and sensational Janam Sakhis changed the language and made whatever changes they liked."[4]

McLeod's observations are as follows:

"The Bala version is, however, the least trustworthy of all the janam sakhi traditions. Errors of fact occur with considerable frequency and the fabulous material which it incorporates far exceeds that of the other janam sakhis, both in quantity and in degree."[5]

Santokh Singh's *Guru Nanak Prakash* written in 1823 was mainly based on Bala's Janam Sakhi.

[1]Published by the Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi, 1969.
[2]*Guru Nanak*, 493.
[3]ibid, 494.
[4]ibid.
[5]W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 22.

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PURATAN JANAM SAKHI OR WILAYATWALI JANAM SAKHI

In addition to Bhai Bala's Janam Sakhi there are four other old Janam Sakhis. Puratan Janam Sakhi is one of them.

This Janam Sakhi contains fifty-seven sakhis. It was written in 1635 AD in the time of Guru Hargobind, nearly one hundred years after the death of Guru Nanak. This is considered to be the oldest Janam Sakhi of Nanak and so it is called Puratan Janam Sakhi. It was taken to England by H. T. Colebrook (1765-1837) and donated to the India Office Library in 1815 or 1816 The well-known German scholar Trumpp discovered it there in 1872. It is therefore called *Wilayatwali Janam Sakhi*. Its another copy discovered at Hafizabad in Pakistan is called *Hafizabadwali Janam Sakhi*. This copy was made in 1733 AD. It was profusely illustrated. Its copies existed before partition at Lahore, Bahawalpur and Shikarpur as well as at Firozpur, Burdwan and Burhanpur. It was the most popular Janam Sakhi among Sikhs. Panjab Government published its copies in 1885. In them some pages of the original manuscript are missing. The name of its author is not known. Macauliffe attributes it to Sewa Das. Some people, therefore, call it *Sewa Das's Janam Sakhi*. Another man of the same name wrote *Parchian* on this subject.

After the *Vars* of Bhai Gurdas which were also written about this time, this Janam Sakhi is considered as the genuine source for Guru Nanak. Stories connected with Bhai Bala and Bhai Lalo are not found in it. Bala's name does not occur in it, though there are frequent references to Mardana. Macauliffe for his *Sikh Religion* borrowed heavily from this Janam Sakhi. The expression, '*Wah-e-Guru Ji ki Fateh*', adopted by Guru Gobind Singh occurs in this Janam Sakhi. Its language is plain and simple. It resembles Pothohari form of Panjabi generally spoken in the districts of Rawalpindi and Attock. It seems to have been written about a hundred years after Guru Nanak's death. It is considered as the most authentic biography of Guru Nanak.

In 1926 the celebrated Panjabi scholar, Bhai Vir Singh (1872-1957) published a Janam Sakhi based upon it.

Dr. Trilochan Singh, on the other hand, holds a poor opinion about this Janam Sakhi. He writes:

"In my opinion it is the most unreliable Janam Sakhi on date of birth and date of death, and also for quotations from Gurbani. Ill advised by Bhai Gurmukh Singh, Macauliffe used the wrong date and year of death and the wrong date of birth from this Janam Sakhi. It quotes and puts into the mouth of Guru Nanak the hymns of the

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third, fourth, and fifth Gurus, which Bala's Janam Sakhi never does."[1]

Sodhi Manohar Das Meharban's Janam Sakhi

Guru Ram Das, the fourth Guru, had three sons, Prithi Mal, Maha Dev and Arjan Mal. He nominated his youngest son, Arjan Mal, his successor. At his supersession Prithi Mal was cut to the quick. He became a lifelong enemy of Guru Arjan. He insulted and ill-treated his father who could not bear this humiliation and died young at the age of 47. Prithi Mal called himself the fifth Guru and enticed a number of Sikhs to follow him. Guru Arjan's Sikhs called Prithi Mal only Prithia and his followers including Prithia as Minas or deceitful. The contemporary author Mohsin Fani writes:

"In short after Arjan Mal his brother Prithia who is called Guru Meharban by his followers held the office of the Guru. Now, in 1645 AD, Guru Harji is his successor. They call themselves Bhagats or servants of God. The disciples of Guru Hargobind, son of Arjan Mal, call them Mina. This is a term of contempt for them."[2]

Manohar Das (1581-1640) was Prithi Mal's son. Prithi Mal lived in Amritsar. Guru Arjan loved Manohar Das. Manohar Das composed verses under the pen-name of Dās Nanak. He was a sincere follower of Guru Nanak. He was so kind-hearted that he was called Meharban. His account of Guru Nanak is entitled *Pothi Sach Khand.*

Meharban's sons were Harji and Chatarbhuj. Their writings are called *Pothi Harji* and *Pothi Chatarbhuj* respectively. All the three works were published by Khalsa College, Amritsar, in two volumes under the title, *Janam Sakhi Guru Nanak*. The first volume gives an account of Guru Nanak's early life and travels, while the second volume describes his later life and teachings.

When Guru Hargobind was acting as Superintendent for Panjab affairs, Meharban first retired to the Kangra hills where he spent about five years. Afterwards he settled at Muhammadipura village in Tahsil Kasur. When Guru Hargobind was engaged in armed conflicts with some Mughal officials, Meharban retired to the jungle area on the borders of Bikaner desert, 43 kms south-west of Firozpur. He named this place Guru Har Sahae meaning God will protect the Guru. The term Guru was used for himself.

Meharban had committed to memory Guru Nanak's *Japji* and a

[1] *Guru Nanak*, 496. For a detailed discussion see McLeod, 15-18.
[2] *Dabistan-e-Mezahib*, Persian, 234.

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large number of hymns of the Guru. He had genuine faith in Guru's teachings. He possessed a melodious voice and was an impressive speaker and singer.

Meharban wrote a Janam Sakhi of Guru Nanak. In it he glorified his father and denounced Guru Arjan. On the whole this Janam Sakhi is considered dependable, because (i) names of persons and places mentioned in it are generally correct; (ii) there are very few miracle stories; and (iii) its dates are accurate. Sodhi Meharban's Janam Sakhi falls into two parts. The first part, called Pothi Sach Khand, was edited by Kirpal Singh and published by Khalsa College, Amritsar, in 1964 under the title *Janam Sakhi Guru Nanak Devji*. Its second part called Pothi Harji, son of Meharban, was published later on. McLeod writes: "The script is Gurmukhi, but the language is basically Braj with an admixture of words drawn from Eastern and Western Panjabi, Persian and Multani."[1] This Janam Sakhi gives the account in discourses (gosts) and not in sakhis.[2]

Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sakhi

Bhai Mani Singh was initiated into the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh. After that he remained with the Guru till 1708 at Nander. On Guru's death he escorted Mata Sahib Devi from Nander to Delhi. Mani Singh returned to Amritsar and became the Granthi at Hari Mandar. As desired by the Sikhs he "expanded the first of Bhai Gur Das's Vars into a life of Guru Nanak called *Gian Ratnavali*."[3] It is regarded as one of the most important Janam Sakhis of Guru Nanak.

Trilochan Singh is of the view that this Janam Sakhi was distorted by some malicious persons. He writes:

"In no other Janam Sakhi it is easier to sift the matter interpolated and distorted than in this Janam Sakhi. Bhai Mani Singh follows the historical chronology of Bhai Gurdas' Var and the person who has distorted it introduces new material by destroying that order."[4] Bhai Bala's name does not occur anywhere in this Janam Sakhi.

[1] *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 19.

[2] Historical significance of Janam Sakhi of Guru Nanak by Meharban is discussed in the *Proceedings of Panjab History Conference*, 123-24. Year is not given in the reprint.

[3] Macauliffe, I. lxxv.

[4] *Guru Nanak*, 495.

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Mahman Prakash

Two more works bearing the same name but written by two different persons deserve the place of Janam Sakhis. They are *Mahman Prakash Vartik* and *Mahman Prakash Kavita*. The first work was written in 1739[1] by Bawa Kripal Singh Bhalla. The second work was composed in 1776 by Sarup Das Bhalla, a descendant of the third Guru, Amar Das. The two accounts are basically the same, but the prose version is shorter. It contains 20 stories. Sarup Das's account has 65 stories. They deal not only with the life of Nanak but of other Gurus also.[2] Sarup Das was a resident of Goindwal. His account of Guru Nanak is based on *Puratan Janam Sakhi*. The later portion is written from memory. He mentions Bhai Bala's name only once. Sarup Das began writing this work at Varanasi and completed it at Amritsar. A copy of this work was with the *manji* holders of Vairowal. That is why it is called *Vairowalwali Janam Sakhi*.

Bhai Gurdas's Var I

Var is a poem devoted to the praises of a hero. In the spiritual domain a Var deals with a struggle between virtue and vice and good and evil.

Bhai Gurdas (1551-1637) was born about twelve years after the death of Guru Nanak. He was a nephew of the third Guru, Amar Das, and the first cousin of Bibi Bhani, daughter of Guru Amar Das and wife of the fourth Guru, Ram Das. He wrote the *Adi Granth* at the dictation of the fifth Guru, Arjan. He also composed thirty-nine Vars or ballads and 556 Kabits or couplets. In Var no. 1, stanzas 23-45, and Var 11 stanzas 13-14 he gives a short account of Guru Nanak. Bhai Gurdas dealt only with the religious aspect of Guru Nanak's life. He collected information about Guru Nanak from the Guru's contemporaries then living. One of them was Bhai Budha, who became a Sikh when Nanak was leading a settled life at Kartarpur. The Vars were written during the first two decades of the seventeenth century. As such they are as good as an original source. They can safely be called as a sort of Janam Sakhi.[3]

His first and eleventh Vars particularly are very useful from historical point of view. The first Var is a valuable source for the study of Guru Nanak. It gives a brief life-sketch of the Divine Master and

[1]Kahan Singh, *Mahan Kosh*.
[2]*Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 28.
[3]Ibid. 14-15.

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mentions in some details the itineraries which the great Guru undertook abroad for the spread of his message. The eleventh *Var* gives reference of the names of the notable Sikhs who lived in times of the first six Gurus, together with the respective places to which they belonged. To Bhai Gurdas also goes the credit for having explained at length in his *Vars* the main teachings of Sikhism.

Comments

1. These Janam Sakhis were written long after the death of Guru Nanak at different times. As none is contemporary they cannot be called a primary source for Guru Nanak's life and work. They form a secondary source. We have to use them as we have nothing else to fall back upon.

2. All of them have a lot of supernatural material and miracle stories. They are a mixture of facts and fiction, myth and legend. It is necessary to divest the incidents and events described in these Janam Sakhis of their supernatural settings. Only then historical facts connected with the life and teachings of Guru Nanak can be gleaned.

3. The Janam Sakhis are written in Panjabi language in Gurmukhi script. They describe Nanak's life in the form of stories and anecdotes, while his teachings are illustrated by dialogues.

4. The Janam Sakhis mention a large number of Sufi Muslim saints and Hindu sages and savants with whom Guru Nanak held discussions on religious topics.

5. The Janam Sakhis contain no reference to Christianity or any Christian saint. It seems probable that during his travels Nanak did not meet a Christian leader nor did he visit any centre of Christianity.

6. All the Janam Sakhis are incomplete. They have many gaps, and do not give a connected story of the Guru's life. They have also been corrupted.

7. The Janam Sakhis give an account of Guru Nanak only. There is little about the other Gurus. No dates are given. Names of places are vague. Copyists have added stories invented by them. They were written by persons of the faith and for the faithful only, not for historians.

8. As regards the relative value of these Janam Sakhis, Bhai Gurdas's Vars, Puratan Janam Sakhi and Meharban's Janam Sakhi are more important than Bala's Janam Sakhi and Mani Singh's *Gian Ratnavali*. Of the first group of three works, Meharban's Janam Sakhi is considered the best from the point of biographical details of authenticity.

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9. McLeod concludes: "The janam-sakhis must be regarded as examples of hagiography and any inclination to treat them as biographies will distort both our understanding of Guru Nanak and our appreciation of the true value of the janam-sakhis themselves."[1]

10. Sardar Gurmukh Nihal Singh observes: "It must be recognised that they have rendered and are still rendering great service to Sikhism and the Sikh masses, in the same way as Tulsi Das's *Ramayana* has been doing among the Hindus. Through them the great personality of Guru Nanak and his sublime teachings are impressed clearly upon the minds of the Sikhs, particularly in the rural parts of the Panjab. The Janam Sakhis rendered great service to the Sikh cause during the dark days of Sikh history when they were cruelly persecuted and attempts were made to exterminate them."[2]

11. Dr. W.H. McLeod is of the opinion that the Janam sakhis, taken as a whole, are not very reliable source of information regarding the life of Guru Nanak and that their real historical significance lies in the fact that they reflect the traditions that had been prevalent among the people in the later times. There is no doubt that the Janam sakhis cannot be fully relied upon for all the information they contain, because at many places facts have been intermingled with spurious and supernatural things. Nevertheless, a cool and critical scrutiny of various janam sakhis does yield some valuable information of a genuinely historical nature regarding various events of Guru Nanak's life.

The Janam Sakhis are also closely connected with the controversial question of Guru Nanak's date of birth, to which we now turn.

B. Guru Nanak's Date of Birth

Baisakh Shudi 3 (April 15, 1469)

Guru Nanak's birthday is celebrated these days on the full moon day of Kartik which generally falls in November. But some Sikh historians dispute this date. They hold that Guru Nanak was born in the month of Baisakh (April) and not in Kartik (November). They advance the following arguments:

1. Most of the Janam Sakhis give Baisakh as the natal month of Guru Nanak:

[1] *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 33.

[2] Article entitled 'Janam Sakhis: Their interpretation and value', published in the Guru Nanak Quincentenary Number, 1969, in *The Spokesman Weekly*, New Delhi, 143.

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(i) *Puratan Janam Sakhi* on page 4 states that Baba Nanak was born in Samvat 1526, month Baisakh, on the third day of moonlit night, in the morning, three hours before dawn.

(ii) Sodhi Meharban's *Janam Sakhi* says that Nanak was born in the light half of Baisakh, 1526 Samvat.[1]

(iii) Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sakhi* gives 1526 Samvat, month Baisakh, moonlit night, third day, four hours before dawn, as the time of Nanak's birth.

(iv) *Mahman Prakash* of Bhai Sarup Das places it in Samvat 1525 Bikrami, Baisakh Shudi 3.

(v) *Vairowalwali Janam Sakhi* states that Nanak took birth at Talwandi Rae Bhoe ki, in the house of Kalu Khatri of Bedi branch in Samvat 1526, month Baisakh, third day of the moon, three hours before dawn.

2. As late as in 1815 during Ranjit Singh's reign the anniversary fair of Guru Nanak's birth was held at Nankana Sahib in the month of April.

3. Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Bhasor, published a number of pamphlets. The pamphlet no. 9 discussed the date of birth of Guru Nanak. It concluded that Guru Nanak was born in Baisakh.

4. Karam Singh, State historian of Patiala, wrote a book on this subject in Gurmukhi entitled *Kattak ki Baisakh*. After a long discussion continued in 221 pages he concludes that Nanak's birth took place in April.

5. Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Amritsar, employed Bhai Gurmukh Singh to settle the dispute. He collected information from all possible sources including Nanak's horoscopes. He published a number of articles in a paper called the *Sudhārak*. He held that the actual date of birth of Guru Nanak was in Baisakh.

Case for Kartik Puranmashi (October 20, 1469)

1. Bhai Bala's Janam Sakhi is the earliest record which says that Nanak was born on Kartik Puranmashi. Bhai Bala's Janam Sakhi was written by Handalis to show that their own founder was superior to Nanak. It holds that Handal was the son-in-law of Raja Janak and his name was Arjan Mal. Nanak was then an ordinary man, and his name was Sundar. In the next life Nanak was born in the house of an oil-presser (teli), while Handal was born in the family of a Pandit. To

[1] *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 66.

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show Nanak's inferiority further, it gave the Guru's date of birth in Kartik. All over Northern India the general belief prevailed that a child born in Kartik was defective and unlucky. Borrowing from Khazan Singh's *History of the Sikh Religion*,[1] Trilochan Singh says that Bhai Bala obtained Guru Nanak's horoscope or Janam patri from Guru's uncle, Lalu, who was then living. It showed that Nanak was born on Kartik Puranmashi, October 20, 1469.

The late Karam Singh, State historian of Patiala, in his Panjabi book entitled *Kattak ki Baisakh* has declared this Janam Sakhi as spurious and Bhai Bala a fictitious person.

2. Bhai Santokh Singh of Amritsar wrote *Nanak Prakash* in 1823. He accepted Bhai Bala's version and put the Guru's date of birth in Kartik. Its printed copy records that Guru Nanak lived for seventy years, five months and seven days. By calculation it places the date of birth of Guru Nanak on Baisakh Shudi 3, Samvat 1526.[2]

3. Trilochan Singh, the latest biographer of Guru Nanak, upholds Kartik Puranmashi as the date of Nanak's birth. In proof of it he cites twenty references on pages 490-91 of his book *Guru Nanak*, all of which are unconvincing to us.[3]

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Reasons for accepting Kartik

1. Macauliffe says that Giani Sant Singh lived at Amritsar in the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He was held in great esteem by the Sikhs. At Amritsar Ram Tirath was a holy place of Hindus. There a big fair was held on Kartik Puranmashi. It was attended by lakhs of people both Hindu and Sikhs. Bhai Sant Singh did not like the Sikhs attending a Hindu fair. He made up his mind "to establish an opposition fair in Amritsar on the same date and thus prevent the Sikhs from making pilgrimage to Ram Tirath of Hindus." He wanted them to attend the Sikh fair at Darbar Sahib. Consequently he adopted the Kartik date.[4]

2. Macauliffe further says that in March and April a number of fairs were held which were attended both by Hindus and Sikhs alike. They were Holi, Hola, Durga Ashtami, Ram Naumi and Baisakhi. After attending five fairs within a month there was very thin atten-

[1]30-35.
[2]*Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 96.
[3]Karam Singh, *Kattak ki Baisakh*, 227.
[4]Macauliffe, I, Lxxxiv; *Kattak ki Baisakh*, 225-26.

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dance on 15 April, the birthday of Guru Nanak. Hence the offerings received at the Gurdwaras were little.

3. Besides, in Baisakh the peasants were busy in harvesting. After attending the Baisakhi fair on April 13, they would apply the sickle to their ripe crops. Then they had no time to spare for another fair or festival immediately after Baisakhi.

4. In October-November harvesting of autumn crops is over. The grain has been gathered and surplus disposed of. The peasants' pockets are full and hearts hilarious. The white cotton crop brings them silver and gold. They are fond of fun and festivity, and in a mood to donate liberally.

5. Weather in Kartik is far better than in Baisakh. It is neither hot nor cold, but almost ideal, dry, sunny and sportive.

6. Besides, all the Hindu fairs are over with Diwali which falls 15 days before the Kartik date of birth of Guru Nanak. After Diwali Guru Nanak's birthday was attended both by the Sikhs and Hindus in very large numbers.

7. Macauliffe gives another reason. He says that Bhai Harbhagat Singh of Shahid Ganj in Lahore wanted to decide the issue of Nanak's birthday in a simple and sure way. He wrote Baisakh and Kartik on two pieces of paper. He placed them before the Holy Granth. Then he asked a little boy to pick up one piece. The paper chosen by the child bore the word Kartik. As a result the Lahore Sikhs began to celebrate the Guru's birthday in November.[1]

8. Guru Nanak's birthday was first of all celebrated at Nankana Sahib in 1868 AD on Kartik Puranmashi.[2]

The real reason for Kartik Puranmashi

The real reason is something else. It has not attracted the attention of any previous historian both Sikh and non-Sikh. It can justify the claim of the Kartik School. In those days, as to some extent even today, it was considered a religious act of merit to bathe in a nearby river in the month of Kartik. Even women did not miss their open bath in this month. Nanak was living at Sultanpur Lodi. A rivulet called Kali Bein flowed near this town. Nanak started bathing in it early in the morning mainly to sing hymns in praise of God in the presence of religious-minded persons then gathered on the bank of

[1]Macauliffe, I, lxxxv.
[2]*Kattak ki Baisakh*, 226.

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this river. Simultaneously he began purifying his body and soul. According to Mohsin Fani who was born 76 years after the death of Guru Nanak, he gradually reduced his food. Then he lived on a little cow-milk. Afterwards he took some clarified butter. Lastly he lived on water and air only, and became '*pavanāhāri*.'[1]

One day after his bath in the stream, weak and emaciated as he was, Nanak lay for rest in a cave in the bank of Bein and there fell into a trance. It was at dawn on the full-moon-day in Kartik, 1496, that Nanak regained consciousness, and with it came enlightenment like that of the great Buddha. This was the day of Nanak's spiritual birth, and could justly be celebrated as such on Kartik Puranmashi.

This view is supported by Bhai Gurdas, the scribe of the *Adi Granth* and the most eminent Sikh scholar. In Kabit no. 345 he says:

Kārtik māsi rut sarad puranmāsi
āth jām sāth ghari āj teri bāri hai.

[It is the month of Kartik, weather is cool, full-moon-day of eight *jams* (24 hours), sixty *gharis* (24 hours); it is your turn today.]

Jam is *pahar* or a period of three hours, and *ghari* means 24 minutes. This Kabit was unchallengeably composed on the full-moon-day in Kartik a little before sunrise when the previous day of twenty-four hours was over. It should not be forgotten that the Hindu calendar day began with the sunrise and not at twelve in the night. Bhai Gurdas was a great poet, and poets always addressed themselves in the second person. For example, Nand Lal Goya, the famous poet at Guru Gobind Singh's court, says:

"Purer than Ab-i-Hayat, the waters of Eternity, are your verses, O Goya!"

"Now, O Goya, why need you go out of your own walls and windows?"

"Your heart, O Goya, has achieved the ultimate (goal) of life."

"Let your thoughts, O Goya, be entangled in the locks of the beloved."[2]

He does not say my or mine. He speaks of himself as you and your.

Similarly, Bhai Gurdas in a solemn prayerful mood addressing himself says:

Guru Nanak had obtained omniscience at this hour and on this day

[1] *Dabistan-e-Mazahib*, Persian, 223.

[2] B.P.L. Bedi, *The Pilgrim's Way*, poems 11, 12, 13, 19, pp. 23, 25, 27, 39.

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many, many years ago. O Gurdas! it is your turn to get divine light today.

It is unmistakably clear that this Kabit does not refer to Guru Nanak's natal day but to the day of his spiritual regeneration. Trilochan Singh in his *Guru Nanak*,[1] and others are wrong in attributing this Kabit to Guru Nanak's physical birthday. Bhai Gurdas could not say: Guru Nanak was born on this day. It is your turn to be born today. 'Your turn' can refer to death, but not to birth. It can certainly relate to spiritual birth.

Conclusion

Almost all the writers agree on two things: (i) that Guru Nanak died on Asauj Shudi 10 Samvat 1596 Vikrami[2] (September 22, 1539 AD) and (ii) that he lived for 70 years, five months and seven days. Chait is the first month and Asauj the seventh month of the Vikrami era. From first Chait to Asauj Shudi ten the period covers six months and twenty-five days. Now calculate the exact date of birth by subtracting the age of Guru Nanak from the date of his death in this way:

Year		Months		Days	
1596	—	6	—	25	(Date of death)
70	—	5	—	7	(Age of Nanak)
1526	—	1	—	18	(Date of birth)

Add one month and eighteen days to the commencement of the new year of 1526 and we get Baisakh Shudi third Samvat 1526.

Thus it is clearly proved that Nanak was born in Baisakh (April) and not in Kartik (October-November).

Birth — April 15, 1469
Death — September 22, 1539

From religious point of view the date of a saint's spiritual birth is as important as his physical birth. Hence the celebration of Guru Nanak's birthday on Kartik Puranmashi is perfectly justified.

[1] 409.

[2] For a detailed discussion about the date of Guru Nanak's death see McLeod, 99-101.

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CHAPTER 4

Guru Nanak, 1469-1539

Early Life

Nanak was born on April 15, 1469, at Rae Bhoe ki Talwandi,[1] now known as Nankana Sahib in Shaikhupura district in Pakistan about 65 kms west of Lahore. His father's name was Kalu Ram and mother's name was Tripta. The name Kalu was generally given to dark-skinned male children, or to babies with striking features to avert the effect of evil eye, when a black mark was applied to their forehead. He belonged to the Bedi branch of Kshatriyas. The word Bedi originally implied Vedi, those who had studied only one Veda as compared with Dwivedi, Trivedi and Chaturvedi. Kalu was a shopkeeper as well as the village patwari or keeper of records of the local landlord, Rae Bular Bhatti, a recently converted Musalman. Nanak learnt arithmetic and accountancy in Lande Mahajani from his father, reading and writing in Devnagri from a Brahman, and Persian and Arabic from a Maulvi. Both Hindus and Muslims liked the child.

Being of a contemplative mind, Nanak was happiest in the company of saints, both Hindus and Muslims. He developed positive dislike for false beliefs and superstitious practices. He did not cherish any love for his father's profession, particularly of trade or business. Nanak uttered God's name all the time. His bent of mind did not appeal to his parents. His mother told him that people regarded him mad. Nanak replied:

They who forget the Name
Are the falsest of the false;
Without the Name,

[1]Many writers are of the view that Nanak was born at Kanha Kachchha, 25 kilometres south of Lahore in his mother's parental home (*Nanke*) and that is why he bore this name. As a rule only the first child was born in the maternal parents' home. Nanak seems to have been given this name after his elder sister Nanaki.

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How shall I live,
O mother?
To repeat the Name is to live,
To forget it is to die.[1]

His father asked him to look after his lands. Nanak replied that he was already God's farmer. When instructed to look after his shop, he answered that he was already a dealer in the True Name.[2]

At Sultanpur Lodi, 1485

There was a constant friction between father and son. Nanak's elder sister, Nanaki, was married in 1475 at Sultanpur Lodi, then capital of the Jalandhar Doab. Sultanpur Lodi is situated 27 kms south of Kapurthala on the bank of Kali Bein, a tributary of river Beas. She took Nanak there in 1485, when he was 16 years old. His brother-in-law, Jairam Uppal secured for Nanak the post of a store-keeper in the *Modikhana* or provisions store of Daulat Khan Lodi, the governor of the Jalandhar Doab. Nanak worked honestly and faithfully, but his heart was in contemplation and devotion to God. All his time was spent in singing the praises of God.

To put him in a worldly frame of mind Nanak was married in 1487 to Sulakhani, daughter of Mulchand Chona Khatri of Pakhoke Randhawa near Batala. Married life had no attraction for Nanak though he had two sons, Sri Chand born in 1494 and Lakhmi Das born in 1496. The duty of looking after Nanak's household fell on Nanaki and Jairam.

Enlightenment, 1496

Nanak visited daily Kali Bein, a rivulet flowing nearby. He found that men and women of the town bathed in that river daily in the month of Kartik. He did the same partly to have a bath in the open and partly to recite hymns to the religious-minded people who thronged the river. He had grown extremely weak by fasting. One day he took shelter in a cave in the bank of the stream from where earth had been dug by people. He fell into a trance and remained unnoticed in that cave for two days. On the third day holy light suddenly flashed into his mind. He regained consciousness, came out of the cave, sipped a little water and slowly walked back home uttering his message in a low voice. This was the

[1] *Adi Granth*, Rag Asa, 9.
[2] Ibid, Rag Gauri, 157.

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last day of Kartik, 1496, the full-moon-day, and the day of Nanak's spiritual regeneration. This is why Nanak's birthday is celebrated on this day.

Nanak's message was: "*Na koi Hindu, na koi Musalman.*" [There is no Hindu, there is no Musalman.] The slogan meant that:

1. All were human beings, sons and daughters of the same Supreme Being. There was no Hindu and no Musalman in His eyes.
2. It also implied that both Hindus and Musalmans had abandoned the tenets of their religions and therefore none was a true Hindu or a true Musalman.
3. It signified that people could not be divided on the basis of religion.
4. Further it indicated that Nanak's mission in life was to reconcile the two hostile communities to enable them to live together in peace and tranquillity.
5. It was a moral and spiritual slogan. It served as his ideal, which he followed throughout his life. It represented his vision of harmony, tolerance and cooperation for mankind and its ultimate union with the Divine.
6. The general belief was:

Hindu is Hindu, Musalman is Musalman,
The twin shall never be calm.

Guru Nanak's reply was:

Hindu is not Hindu, Musalman is not Musalman,
The Sikh religion to both shall apply balm;
No conflict will occur between Hinduism and Islam,
If both honestly worship the true Nām.

The Qazi of Sultanpur Lodi felt offended at Nanak's slogan. He summoned him to his court to explain. Nanak replied he saw neither a Hindu nor a Musalman. He saw only man. He then sang:

Nanak, bhagat sadā vigās
Suniye dukh pāp kā nās

[Nanak! thy devotees are ever joyous, for they listen how to end sorrow and sin!]

Mardana

There lived in Talwandi a Muslim minstrel, Mirasi by caste, named Mardana.[1] He played sweet music on his rebeck. He went from

[1]Mardana's parents had lost all their children. When Mardana was born, his mother out of sheer despair and desperation called him *Marjana*, one who would soon die. Nanak changed it into Mardana meaning brave or manly.

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house to house and from village to village to play upon his instrument and collect grain and flour offered by the people in return. At Talwandi Nanak enjoyed his company and often ran to him to listen to his devotional tunes in praise of God. Kalu got reports from Jairam that Nanak had no love for his job. This upset the father. He thought that Mardana might be able to persuade Nanak to remain devoted to his post. Mardana was ten years older than Nanak.[1] He was sent to Sultanpur in 1499. Nanak was highly pleased at his arrival. It became usual with both of them to sing songs in praise of God in the morning and evening, before and after office hours, in a public place. Mardana had a great fascination for Nanak's sweet, melodious voice, charming manners, love of humanity, and his inspiring, penetrating verses. Mardana lived with Nanak. Both had an excellent time and became inseparable from each other.

This drama was daily enacted in the streets of Sultanpur Lodi. It did not give peace to Nanak. His mind remained disturbed. He was determined to devote all his time to sing the praises of God. Mardana agreed with him.

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A missionary, 1499

Nanak felt that his mission must be to go to the people with his new blazing faith to make them lead good life. To achieve this objective he decided to renounce worldly pursuits, take to preaching and become a faqir.[2]

Nanak did not belong to a caste of preachers. He was a Kshatriya, wielder of the sword. It was under the Muslim rule they took to trade as soldier's life was completely denied to them. He was born in an affluent family. He had a good job, a virtuous and devoted wife and two lovely sons. He did not suffer from any misery and misfortune. He was pained at the bigotry of Muslims and the wretchedness of Hindus. In the midst of plenty he took to penury.

Nanak realized his deep bond to humanity. He was moved by the sufferings he saw around him. He wished to help men and women find freedom and happiness. He was sympathetic towards women and the poor upon whom the weight of society fell most heavily.

Nanak immediately resigned his job, "donned a religious costume",[3]

[1]Mardana was born at Talwandi in 1459. Kartar Singh, *Sikh Itihas*, II, 2.
[2]Henry Court, *Sikhan De Raj Di Vithiya*, 3.
[3]Macauliffe, I, 37.

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and took to moving about to spread his divine mission. He was accompanied by his faithful disciple and friend, Mardana. Nanak's father-in-law took away Sri Chand, while his wife and the little baby remained with Jairam.

Nanak did not claim any divinity or prophethood, nor did he equate Hinduism with Islam because it was considered blasphemy. He won the confidence of Muslims by sitting for days in graveyards and reciting verses in praise of Allah. He did not hesitate to join in Muslim prayers. He explained the significance of five prayers thus:

Make the first prayer to speak the truth;
the second for earning lawfully thine daily bread;
the third to practise charity in the name of God;
the fourth for the purification of the mind; and
the fifth for the adoration and worship of God.
And let good deeds be your article of faith.
The Kalma sayeth Nanak,
A man becomes false through and through by practice of hypocrisy.[1]

Nanak pointed out that a true Muslim was one who performed good actions. All else was false. Hatred of others, particularly of Hindus, was an un-Islamic act, because both Hindus and Muslims were dear to God. A true Hindu or Musalman spontaneously felt kinship with all men, irrespective of their race, religion, country, nation, clime or colour. The presence of Mardana by his side had a chastening effect upon Muslim audiences.

To Hindus Nanak preached against idol worship and caste distinctions, both by precept and example. He chose to dine with persons of low castes or classes. Nanak laid emphasis upon the observance of five things:

(i) *Gan* or singing the praises of God;
(ii) *Dan* or charity for all;
(iii) *Ashnan* or purification of the body by morning bath;
(iv) *Sewa* or service of mankind; and
(v) *Simran* or constant repetition of the Name and prayer to God for His grace.

The langar or community mess

Persons who came to pay homage to the Guru made offerings mainly in kind in accordance with old tradition. In the beginning Nanak distributed them among the poor and the needy who came to

[1] *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, 77-78.

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listen to him. Later he gave all the offerings to his hosts for maintaining a free mess called *langar*, where all dined without any consideration of caste, creed, religion or social status. The persons eating in the community mess formed a *pangat*. All persons from a labourer to a lord and from a peasant to a prince were treated alike in dignity and prestige and were served the same food and in the same manner. The contribution to the community mess could be made in cash, kind or service. Each was held in similar esteem and regard. In this way Nanak tried to loosen the bonds of caste system. Through this institution he developed spirit of sacrifice, service and brotherhood among his followers. This made Nanak's teachings popular. *Langar* became a symbol of equality and fraternity among his disciples who came to be called *Shishya* or Sikhs.

Mohsin Fani says that Nanak did not favour meat, wine and hog.[1] He further remarks that Nanak prohibited animal food.[2] It is for this reason that in Guru's *langar* meat diet is not served. Latif also says that "Nanak abstained from animal food."[3] But he was not opposed to a meat diet. On an enquiry Nanak defended meat-eating by declaring that the baby who drew nourishment from its mother's breast virtually lived upon flesh. But he forbade the slaughter of the cow.[4]

Travels

The Puratan Janam Sakhi gives five rounds of Guru Nanak's travels. Meharban's Janam Sakhi combines Guru Nanak's travels to the east and south into one journey.

In south-west Panjab, 1499-1500

Having adopted the life of a missionary, Nanak decided to go on travels. Nanak took four great journeys. Travelling in those days was full of all hazards, trials and travails. There were no roads and no common transport. All the routes and paths were infested with robbers, thieves and dacoits. Religious fanaticism was strong everywhere. Wild beasts and reptiles abounded. But nothing deterred Nanak from his resolution. He used whatever means of travels were

[1] "*Gosht-o-khamar-o-khok ra haram shamurdah.*" *The Dabistan*, 223.

[2] "*Mardum ra az akal-e-haiwani mana amad.*" ibid.

[3] Latif, *Panjab*, 255. Cunningham, "Nanak had himself abstained from animal food", *A History of the Sikhs*, 50.

[4] W.L. M'Gregor, quoted by Sarjit Singh Bal, in his *Guru Nanak in the Eyes of Non-Sikhs*, 63-64.

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available, otherwise he walked. His first journey was made in West Panjab. He left for his home district of Shaikhupura via Lahore and Sayyidpur, 13 kms south-east of Gujranwala. He usually stayed outside a village, town or city. His recitation of self-composed hymns in praise of God to the accompaniment of music played by Mardana attracted small audiences wherever they halted. At Sayyidpur Nanak put up on the bank of a tank on the outskirts of the town. A gurdwara called Rori Sahib stands at this place now. Nanak's sweet songs, simplicity, sincerity and serenity won for him a lifelong true devotee in Lalo, a carpenter. He displayed so much humility, piety and veneration for Nanak that the Guru agreed to shift to Lalo's house during his sojourn. Just in those days Malik Bhago, a rich landlord of Kshatriya caste, lived there. On learning that Nanak, his caste-fellow, was living with a Shudra he felt ashamed. He immediately invited the Guru to put up with him. Nanak declined the invitation as it was based on considerations of caste. He also explained that the Malik had accumulated wealth by exploiting others, while Lalo earned his bread by the sweat of his brow.

From Sayyidpur Nanak went to village Sewki in Sialkot district. There he wanted to meet a famous saint Shah Hamzah. The Shah was away to Sialkot town 120 kilometres north of Lahore. Nanak proceeded to that place. He put up under a *beri* tree (Zizyphus Gujuba) situated on the edge of a graveyard on the eastern side of the town. This place became famous as Babe di Ber. He held discussion with Shah Hamzah for a number of days.

From Sialkot Nanak turned towards Achal Batala, 7 kilometres east of Batala. He held discussions with yogis who had assembled there on the occasion of the annual fair of Shivaratri.[1] From there he moved southward in the direction of his hometown Talwandi. After paying respects to his parents and Rae Bular, he retired to the jungle of Chhanga Manga. Then he visited Chunian where Nanak met Shaikh Daud Karamati and Sayyid Hamid Ganj Bakhsh.[2] At Pakpattan he met Shaikh Ibrahim.

Nanak now decided to visit Multan, a stronghold of Muslim Sufi saints. On the way he stopped for the night at Tulamba. There lived a notorious robber in the garb of a holy saint. He assumed the title of Shaikh and called himself Sajjan or a gentleman. He provided free

[1]Bhai Gurdas, *Var I*, 39-44.
[2]Sufi Ghulam Qasim Qadiri, *Tazkirah Baba Nanak*, 28-34.

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food and lodging to unwary travellers, killed them in the night and seized their property. The Guru stayed with him. He did not expect any danger as he had nothing to lose. He won the robber's heart by his sweet hymns sung in praise of God and good conduct. Sajjan turned a new leaf and became a peaceful and honest citizen.[1]

Nanak's fame had reached Multan. The Muslim saints heard about his arrival. At a short distance from the town Nanak was accosted by a representative of the local Sufis who offered the Guru a milk bowl full to the brim. The idea was that Multan was full of saints and there was no room for newcomers. Nanak understood its implication. He plucked a jasmine flower, placed it on milk and returned it with thanks. The inference was that though Multan was full of holy men,[2] yet there was room for him also. It also indicated that Nanak would live lightly like the flower and would add fragrance to their company. During his short sojourn Nanak impressed everybody by his saintly appearance, and the message of divine love.[3] He went as far as Mithankot to meet Mian Mitha, a Sufi saint.

While returning he visited Pakpattan and Dipalpur. The former, formerly called Ajodhan, was an important centre of the celebrated Sufi saint Baba Farid's followers.

On his return to Sultanpur Nanak made up his mind to go on a long tour and visit the centres of lore and learning. With regard to the dates and even some places visited by Guru Nanak, it is difficult to speak with precision in the absence of any data. The generally accepted view is given here. Nanak wished to examine the actual working of existing religions at their sacred places.

Travel to the east and south, 1501-1514

Nanak went to the east and south in the company of Bhai Bala in 1501 and returned after fourteen years. He visited prominent places. Nanak was at Kurukshetra on the occasion of a great festival. At Delhi Nanak put up at Majnu ka Tila. He and Mardana were both imprisoned for preaching in public in violation of the orders issued by Sikandar Lodi. In jail Nanak sang songs and Mardana played upon rebeck. All the prisoners listened to them with attention. As their pre-

[1] *Puratan Janam Sakhi*, 13, quoted by McLeod, 38-39.

[2] Bhai Gurdas, *Var I*, 44. There is a famous proverb about Multan: *Chahar chiz ast tohfa-e-Multan; Gard, garma, gada-o-goristan*. (Multan is celebrated for four things; dust, heat, beggars and graveyards.)

[3] Macauliffe, I, 180.

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sence had disturbed the normal working of the jail, the Guru and his disciple were set free.[1] He visited Mathura, where he saw the famous Keshav Dev's temple demolished later by Sikandar Lodi, Brindaban and Agra. From there he went to Hardwar, Ajodhya, Prayag, Banaras, Gaya and Dacca. At Maldev in Bengal, the Guru put up in a mango grove which became popular as Guru's Garden.[2] At these places of pilgrimage, Nanak took to strange type of performances to drive home his teachings into the minds of his audiences. At Hardwar he saw people bathing in the Ganga and throwing water towards the rising sun. The Guru enquired what they were doing. The reply was that they were offering oblations to their ancestors in heaven. Nanak turned his face to the west and began to throw water in that direction. It was now the turn of the people to ask what he was doing. Nanak quietly said that he was sending water to his fields in Panjab. How could this water reach his fields five hundred kilometres away, they inquired. "If this water cannot reach my fields which are so near, how can your water go to heaven which is so far away?" This answer opened the eyes of the pilgrims and convinced them of the futility of their belief.

Nanak must have met Kabir at Banaras and must have had frequent discussions with him on religious topics. The author of *Shri Kabirji*, 76-116 positively holds this view. It appears that Kabir exercised the greatest influence on Nanak's youthful mind. Biman Behari Majumdar in an article says :[3]

"Iswardasa, the author of the *Chaitanya Bhagavata* in Oriya states in chapters 47, 61 and 64 that Nanak not only met Chaitanya but also danced and sang with him."

The most noticeable factor in the worship at Banaras is the *Arti* which is performed just at sunset, before the gods are laid to rest for the night. A salver containing a number of small lamps burning in clarified butter and incense is continuously waved before the idol to the accompaniment of deafening sound of gongs and a loud song collectively sung in praise of the god, to whom the temple was dedicated. On seeing this, Nanak composed the following hymn:

The firmament is Thy salver,
The sun and moon Thy lamps,

[1]Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, 45.

[2]Ghulam Qasim Qadiri, *Tazkirah Baba Nanak*, 40.

[3]'Entitled Guru Nanak and His Contemporaries', published in *Guru Nanak*, Publication Division, Government of India, 127.

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The galaxy of stars,
Are as pearls scattered,
The woods of sandal are Thine incense,
The forests Thy flowers,
But what worship is this
O Destroyer of Fear?[1]

While explaining that there was no difference between Hinduism and Islam, somebody enquired if Hindu cremation and Muslim burial were also the same. Nanak said:

The clay of the Musalman finds its way into the potter's hands,
Who fashions vessels and bricks out of it.
The cries come out of the fire;
And as it burns, the poor thing weeps and sheds tears of cinders.
Nanak, the Creator alone knows . . .
Whether cremation is better or the burial.[2]

Having visited Bihar, Bengal, and Assam Nanak came to Jagannath Puri on the sea coast in Orissa. According to Sodhi Meharban's *Janam Sakhi of Guru Nanak*[3], there Nanak made up his mind to visit south also. Passing through Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu he called at Madurai. From there he went to Rameshvaram and then to Sri Lanka. Back to Madurai he visited Kanya Kumari. He returned along the Malabar coast across Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan to Sultanpur. He seems to have seen Bharthari Hari Yogi's cave at Ujjain. He could not have ignored visiting Mira Bai, twenty-years his senior, and then at the height of her fame. During his return journey passing through Gujarat Nanak should have called upon Vallabhacharya. Bhai Gurdas describes this long journey in three words: *Bābā āyā tírthon.*

Christianity

Khushwant Singh is wrong when he says that in Malabar "there was a thriving Christian community at the time." Vasco da Gama visited Malabar in 1498. He did not leave any Christians behind. He bombarded Calicut in 1502. Hence in a few years' time a flourishing Christian centre could not have sprung up. He also traces some effect of Christianity on Guru Nanak: "It must, however, be admitted that there are some aspects of Sikhism which bear close resemblance to

[1]Khushwant Singh, *The Sikhs*, 38.
[2]*Asa di Var*, translated by Teja Singh, 74; Macauliffe, I, 226.
[3]104

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Christianity, e.g., the doctrine of Grace (*prasad*)."[1] Records do not mention any contact with Christians. The doctrine of Grace exists in Hinduism also

Tour into the Himalayas, 1515-1517

Nanak's next journey was to the north into the Himalayas, the home of yogis, siddhas, and Buddhists. Hassu, a blacksmith and Sihan, a calico-printer, seem to have accompanied the Guru. He visited Jwalamukhi, Kangra, Rawalsar, Kulu, Lahaul Spiti and Tibet. In Kulu hills his visit is commemorated at the hot springs at Manikaran on the river Parabti. He spent two years, 1515 to 1517, in the hills. To protect himself from cold, Nanak wore a dress of skins. He held discourses with the followers of Gorakhnath and Machhendranath Nanak said:

"The darkness of falsehood prevails throughout; the moon of truth is invisible. I have set out in search of it. The earth is groaning under the load of sin. The yogis have retired to the mountains, and knowing nothing better are busy in smearing ashes on their bodies. Who should then save the world? Without a true Guru, it is sunk in ignorance."[2] It seems that Nanak went as far as Mansarovar in Tibet.[3] He returned through Garhwal and Sirmaur.[4]

Trek to west Asia, 1517-1521

Nanak had travelled all over India. Most of it was ruled over by Muslims who had come from north-western countries. He was keen to visit the birth country of Islam first, and then sojourn in the home-land of masters of India. His object was to study their life and manners and sources of their vitality.[5]

Guru Nanak's last journey was made to West Asia from 1517 to 1521. Mardana accompanied him. From Sultanpur Lodi they went in a boat down the river Beas and Satluj to Panjnad. From there they made for the seaport of Kot Lakhpat. In this tedious journey through a desert Nanak rode on a camel. Bhai Gurdas in his Var I mentions Mecca

[1]Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, I, 33-34, fn. 19.

[2]Bhai Gurdas, *Var I*, 29; Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, 11.

[3]Bhai Gurdas, *Var I*, 28-31; *Puratan Janam Sakhi*, 49; McLeod, 48; *Nanak Prakash*, III, 691-92.

[4]Ghulam Qasim Qadiri, *Tazkirah Baba Nanak*, 58-63.

[5]Ibid, 66-67.

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first and Baghdad afterwards. This shows that Guru Nanak went to Mecca by sea. Chandra Prakash Gawri visited Kutch in 1977. He went over Kot Lakhpat. Inside he saw numerous buildings including a temple, a mosque and a gurdwara. The whole area indicated its flourishing state in the past. The Sindhi priest of the gurdwara told Gawri that Guru Nanak sailed for Mecca from there. Kot Lakhpat is connected with the sea by a branch of river Indus. The Granthi said Kot Lakhpat was an ancient port for trade with the Persian Gulf countries. The ruins indicated that it had been a thriving port in the past. A pair of wooden slippers (*kharāon*), almost black in colour and abnormally thick, fit for use in the desert, kept in a glass case, were shown to him declaring that they belonged to Guru Nanak. Nanak dressed himself in the manner of a Haji or pilgrim to Mecca and Medina. He put on blue garments, carried an earthen jug for water, and a small carpet for saying prayers. A thick staff was in his hand. "And when an opportunity offered, he shouted the Muhammadan call to prayer like any orthodox follower of the Arabian prophet."[1] At Mecca, while sleeping his feet moved towards the Ka'ba, the sacred shrine of Islam. The angry Mulla named Jiwan kicked and scolded him for showing disrespect to the house of God. Quietly came the answer: "Pray, turn my feet in the direction where all-pervading God is not present." At Medina he was asked whether he was a Hindu or a Musalman. Nanak gave Kabir's reply : "Hindu kahān tān maryān, Musalmān bhī nānh; Pānch tat kā putlā, ghaibi khele mānh." (If I call myself a Hindu, I risk my life. Nor am I a Musalman. I am a thing of five elements in which lives God).[2]

From Arabia Nanak went to Iraq and stopped for some time at Baghdad, the capital of the Caliph. As usual he stayed outside the town near a graveyard. Nanak's visit to Baghdad is recorded in the Vars of Bhai Gurdas, who wrote:

Bābā gayā Baghdād nún bāhar jai kiyā asthāna;
ik Bābā akāl rūp dujā rabābi Mardāna.

[Baba went to Baghdad, and put up outside. The immortal Baba was accompanied by the rebeck player Mardana].[3]

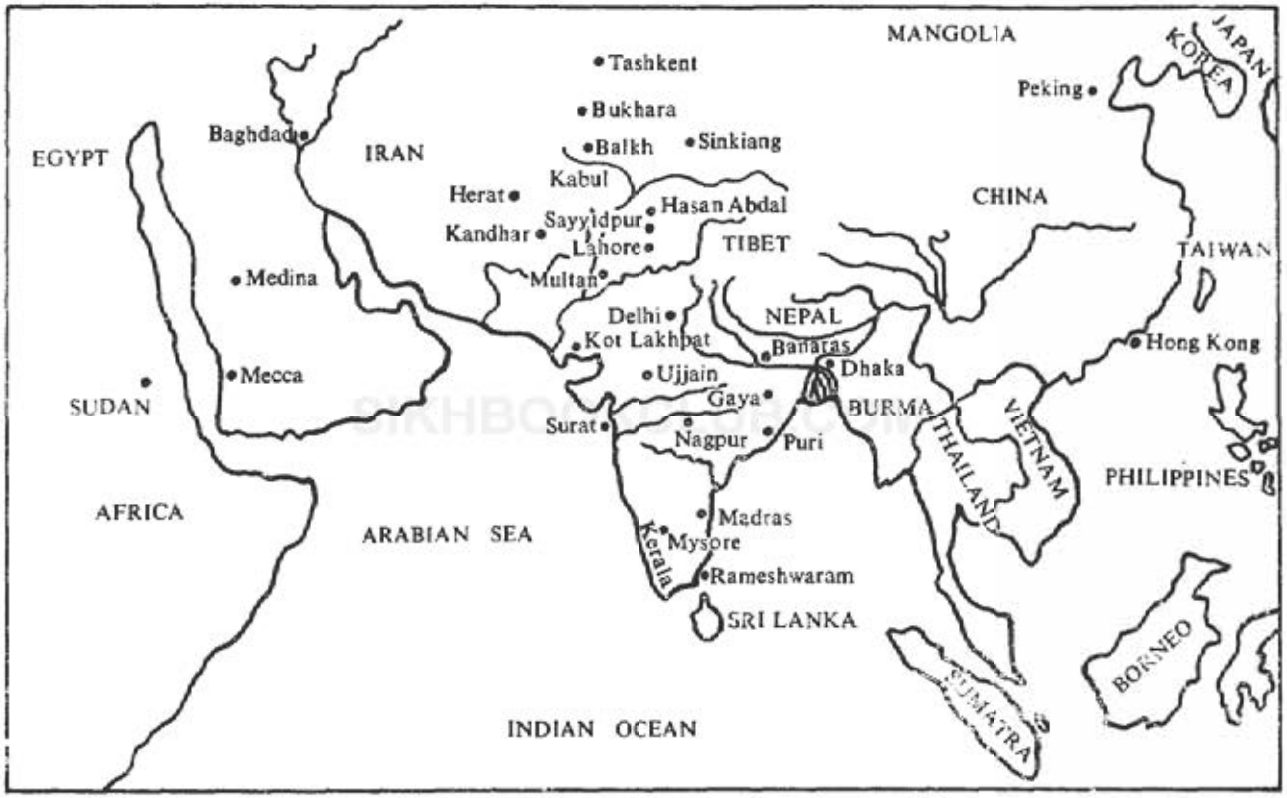
Nanak sang hymns in praise of God. Mardana played a sweet tune

[1] Macauliffe, I, 174.

[2] Bhai Gurdas, *Var I*, 32, 33, 37; Ghulam Qasim Qadiri, *Tazkirah Baba Nanak*, 68.

[3] *Var I*, 35-36; Bhai Kahan Singh, *Gurshabad Ratnakar Mahankosh*, 622.

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Guru Nanak's Travels

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on his instrument. Some people objected to the use of music in the service of God. A darvesh observed that music turned mind from God towards sensuality. Nanak replied that God created music, and that He was more easily accessible through a pleasing hymn than in dry prose.

An inscription in mixed Turkish and Arabic commemorates Guru Nanak's visit to Baghdad. The stone is fixed in the wall of an enclosure, near a graveyard, two and a half kilometres away from the railway station. During World War I, Indian troops fought in Iraq and were encamped at Baghdad. This inscription came to their notice. A Sikh officer got it published in the *Loyal Gazette*.[1] As the inscription is not clearly legible it has been translated differently. Indubhushan Banerjee got it translated by Maulana Agha Muhammad Kazim Shirazi thus: "Guru Murad died. Baba Nanak Faqir helped in constructing this building, which is an act of grace from a virtuous follower, 927 AH."[2] Its rendering by Teja Singh and Ganda Singh,[3] by Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha,[4] by Bhai Vir Singh,[5] by Bhai Santokh Singh and others varies to a large extent. McLeod totally rejects the idea of Guru Nanak's visit to Baghdad. Whatever its true meaning might be, three things stand out clearly in this inscription, and which

[1]Lahore, 1914.

[2]*Evolution of the Khalsa*, I, 73.

[3]Teja Singh and Ganda Singh have rendered it into English thus: "In memory of the Guru, that is the Divine Master, Baba Nanak Faqir Aulia, this building has been raised anew, with the help of Seven Saints;" and the chronogram reads: "The blessed disciple has produced a spring of grace year 927 H." *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, 12.

[4]Bhai Kahan Singh's Panjabi version is translated here into English: "Look, how God fulfilled the wishes that Baba Nanak's monument was built anew. Seven big saints helped in it. Its date is supplied by this chronogram: that the virtuous disciple opened a beneficial spring of water in the soil."

Bhai Kahan Singh added a note to it: "When the True Guru visited Baghdad, all the wells there had saltish water. The well founded by Guru Nanak Dev gave out sweet water. This well lies near the inscription. Even now the water of this well is sweet." *Gurshabad Ratnakar Mahankosh*, II, 175.

[5]The English rendering of Bhai Vir Singh's passage in Panjabi is as follows: "When Murad saw the ruined condition of the building of the great and godly Baba Nanak, the saint of God, he rebuilt it with his own hands, so that it could last as a historical monument from generation to generation, and the holy reward of his virtuous disciple might continue. 917 Hijri. Some read it as 927."

Sri Guru Nanak Chamatkar, II, 175. Its Panjabi translation is similar to that of Bhai Santokh Singh's *Sri Guru Nanak Prakash*, annotated by Bhai Vir Singh, 1052.

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are admitted by all and sundry. It gives the names of Guru Murad and Baba Nanak Faqir as well as the date. The year 927 Hijri covers the period from December, 1520 to November, 1521. In the latter month (November, 1521) Nanak was present at Sayyidpur (Eminabad) in Panjab at the time of Babar's invasion. The date of the invasion is given by Nanak himself as 1578 Vikrami Samvat (1521 AD). It means that Guru Nanak was at Baghdad towards the close of 1520, and left it shortly afterwards.

After Bhai Gurdas's reference to Mardana at Baghdad, his name does not occur anywhere in original Sikh records. The place and date of Mardana's death are given differently by Sikh writers. Bhai Kahan Singh says that Mardana was born in 1459, ten years before Nanak and died in 1534 in Afghanistan on the bank of the Kurram river, and that Guru Nanak himself performed his obsequies.[1] In that year Guru Nanak was living at Kartarpur, and he did not undertake another journey to Afghanistan. Hence his account does not appear to be true. Kartar Singh accepts this date but says that Mardana died at Kartarpur.[2] *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs* in a note on page 248 states that "Mardana died at Kartarpur about nine years before Guru Nanak passed away." Ghulam Qasim Qadiri says that Mardana passed away in Khwarizm, and that Nanak performed his obsequies according to Muslim rites and then left for Kabul.[3] Syed Muhammad Latif[4] writes: "While on his travels in Afghanistan he lost his faithful servant Mardana, the harper who was originally a Mahomedan, but who had become a convert to Nanak's new doctrines and was burnt, according to his own wish, in Khulm,[5] where he died." But all these statements are not supported by any authority and seem to be based on mere surmises.

Being a Shia Mardana was keen to die at the centre of Shiaism. In our opinion the reference to Guru Murad in the Baghdad inscription relates to Mardana. This conclusion is based on the following grounds.

1. Mardana was at least ten years older than Guru Nanak, and by ordinary laymen in a foreign country the older man was taken for the Guru and the younger man as his disciple.

[1] *Gurshabad Ratnakar Mahankosh*, 714.
[2] *Sikh Itihas*, II, 6-7.
[3] *Tazkirah Baba Nanak*, 77.
[4] *History of the Panjab*, 245.
[5] Khulm is a town in Khorasan, Central Asia.

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2. Northern India had been under Muslim rule for about five hundred years. Rulers and soldiers poured into this land from Muslim countries of Central and Western Asia. The Muslim state being theocratic, it was unimaginable at Baghdad, the headquarters of the Caliph of Islam, that a Hindu could be the Guru of a Muslim. On the other hand it was a usual phenomenon to find Hindus as the followers of Muslim saints. Mardana could naturally be looked upon as a Sufi saint and Nanak as his disciple.

3. Nanak preached equality and fraternity, and he did not assert his superiority over his faithful disciple, companion and friend.

4. Besides, Murad and Mardana sound alike. Murad was a common name with Muslims both in India and abroad. Mardana was unique in the sense that no such second name is heard of.

We therefore conclude that Mardana died at Baghdad, and the memorial in question was raised by Nanak with the help of local holy men in honour of his devoted disciple. The inscription was installed there later on after Nanak's departure for India.

Having discussed this matter McLeod concludes:

"To answer your three questions: (1) Does the inscription refer to Guru Nanak? Almost certainly not. (2) What date does it give? Apparently 1226 A.M.=1811-12. (3) Can it be accepted as evidence of a visit by Guru Nanak to Baghdad? No."

From Baghdad Nanak passed through Iran, Khorasan and Afghanistan via Kandhar, Kabul and Jalalabad. He came to Peshawar and crossed the Indus at Attock, and halted at Hasan Abdal. It seems the Guru put the impression of his hand at the beautiful spring in memory of his visit at the request of local inhabitants, all Muslims. Having visited Mecca and Medina, a rare occurrence in those days, Nanak received respectful homage from Muslims as a Haji. The place is called Panja Sahib. It is a sacred place of the Sikhs. A gurdwara commemorates his visit.[1]

Effects of travels

1. These travels lasting for 22 years produced great effects. Nanak got the real insight into the two main religions of this country. He met learned men, eminent leaders, and men well-versed in the lore of

[1]In 1930 Rai Bahadur Sohan Lal, Professor of Geography at Central Training College, Lahore, led a party of about 300 students to visit important places in West Panjab. At Panja Sahib, the organisers of Gurdwara compelled them to dine in the langar, and served a nice meal in bronze utensils.

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their respective creeds. He came to know of their virtues and vices. He admired the former and condemned the latter.

2. He was opposed to Hindu bigotry and Muslim fanaticism. He learned to live amicably with both. He developed a technique of admonishing both in a pleasant and peaceful manner. His wit and wisdom impressed even his bitterest critics and they did not feel offended at his innocent replies. His answers at Hardwar, South India, and Mecca clearly illustrate this point.

3. His travels taught him the way to preserve his reform movement through the institution of Guruship.

4. Nanak closely studied Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. He chose what was best in these three faiths. The personal God of Hinduism, spiritual equality of Buddhism and congregations of Islam were all combined in Sikhism.

5. With regard to money he returned as poor as he went. But he brought a great wealth in spirituality and in the science of practical living and human relations. He rubbed shoulders with all sorts of people, good and bad, rich and poor, high and low, plain and cunning, vicious and virtuous, and so on. The best lesson he learnt and taught was to live on moral principles. It was also to place oneself in place of the other person and then realize his feelings and act accordingly.

6. Nanak neither abandoned Hinduism nor adopted Islam. He was welcomed by the followers of both the religions, and his disciples were of both the faiths.

7. Wherever Nanak went, he left an impress of his personality on the minds of the people. The Pandas at Hardwar, the learned Pandits at Banaras, the Mullas at Mecca, and the Pirs at Baghdad, were all deeply influenced by Nanak's penetrating wit and wisdom and spirit of tolerance.

8. Guru Nanak's travels show his inquisitive mind, his eagerness to know the truth and closely observe customs, manners and beliefs of different people. At some places strength of Nanak's character was tested. Once Nurshah an enchanting young woman tried to entice Nanak with her beauty and wealth. Nanak thanked her and passed on.

9. Of all the founders of various religions Nanak alone travelled so extensively. No other spiritual thinker before Nanak had met so many people and seen such varied life. With Name on his tongue he travelled fearlessly in many countries and climes. Nanak ascended the snow-clad mountains in the Himalayas. He crossed burning sands of Bikaner and Sind and Arabia. He passed across

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dense forests of Assam and Madhya Pradesh. He travelled through hostile and unfamiliar countries. While travelling in various parts of India and abroad, Nanak spoke in the language of music uttering the name of God prevalent in a particular region. Thus his music was understood by all, and they looked upon him as a man of God. He had no interpreter, yet he was understood. The knowledge of Hindi proved useful in India, while his early instruction in Persian and Arabic stood him in good stead in West Asia. In Muslim countries people asked him to which country and religion he belonged. Nanak's answer was he belonged to God's world, and his religion was to worship the feet of the Lord and to serve humanity with love and devotion. In view of insecurity on the roads, lack of transport, language barriers, different food and living habits, ignorance of other places, travels of Guru Nanak in the early sixteenth century were indeed a marvel.

Guru Nanak at Kartarpur, 1522-1539

Having spent some time at Sayyidpur both with Lalo and as a prisoner in Babar's camp, Nanak visited his birth-place Talwandi, mainly to condole with Mardana's family. His parents and patron Rae Bular were dead. He took Mardana's son, Shahzada, with him, and joined his family then living at Pakhoke[1] situated on the eastern bank of the Ravi. He had travelled thousands of miles undaunted by weather, beasts and bandits, and felt tired. He now decided to settle down and give a practical shape to his mission. Opposite to this place on the other side of the river, the local zamindars requested Nanak to settle there. Diwan Karori Mal Khatri offered him free land. The people built a dharamsala and some houses.[2] Nanak shifted to this place and called it Kartarpur, the abode of God. It now forms a part of Tahsil Shakargarh, in Sialkot district of Pakistan. Bhai Gurdas says: "The Baba came to Kartarpur and discarded the pilgrim's dress. He put on working clothes and continued to preach sitting on a cot."[3] He uttered the inspired divine word, which kindled light and dispelled darkness. Learned discourses and recitations of God's praises became the order of the day. In the evening were sung the Guru's compositions, *Sodar* and *Arati* and in the morning *Japji*. Here Nanak spent the last seventeen years of his life with his family and followers. He cultivated his lands and preached his doctrines.

[1]Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, 1, 9.
[2]Ghulam Qasim Qadiri, *Tazkirah Baba Nanak*, 57.
[3]*Var 1*, 38.

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The Guru preached through kirtan. The sacred hymns composed by himself were sung in chaste music. Kirtan inspired its listeners and participants to holiness. The praise of God in sweet music evoked ecstasy in the congregation.

The Sikh community in Nanak's time consisted of farmers, artisans, petty traders of rural area and labourers. According to Mohsin Fani they were called Kartari.[1]

At Kartarpur Guru Nanak was joined by two young men, Lahna born in 1504 and Budha who was still younger. Both of them became his devoted followers. The former became Nanak's successor while the latter was appointed high priest to apply tilak to the new Sikh Guru.

Guru Nanak demanded personal goodness and self-discipline from every individual as an expression of his religion. He believed that a good society would inevitably emerge from this widespread good living of each man and woman. He was thus ethical and practical. His was essentially a social religion not a solitary religion. Guru Nanak called his religion Gurmat or Guru's wisdom. This word occurs in the hymns of Guru Nanak more than two hundred times. His disciples called themselves Sikhs, meaning a learner or a person who takes spiritual lessons from a teacher The public called them Nanak Panthis, Nanak Prastan or Sikhs. They addressed Nanak as Sat Guru. The places where Sikhs gathered to listen to the Guru's sermons and sing hymns in praise of God were known as *dharamsals* or Gurdwaras,[2] and their greeting to one another was Sat Kartar or Sat Nām. It means that only Creator is true. While initiating a person as his disciple, Guru Nanak administered baptism of *charan pahul*. He put water in a clean vessel, and then touched the water with his great toe. He recited Japji while doing so. This water was drunk by the disciple on his palms five times, in all reverence and humility.[3] The remaining water was distributed among the congregation.

[1] *The Dabistan*, 225.

[2] The word Gurdwara occurs many a time in Guru Nanak's hymns such as in *Asa*, 351; Suhi, 730; Ramkali, 930, 933, and Maru, 1015. Vide Trilochan Singh, *Guru Nanak's Religion*, 2.

[3] This practice was continued by the succeeding Gurus until it was changed by Guru Gobind Singh.

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CHAPTER 5

Guru Nanak's Teachings

At a time when Hindus were frustrated and dismayed, Guru Nanak appeared to elevate the spirit of religion and man. His object was to regenerate the suffering humanity from superstition, ritualism, casteism, persecution and social injustice. He wished to build a community of self-respecting men and women, devoted to God, and to fill them with a sense of religious liberty, social equality and brotherhood for all. His followers were called Sikh, a local form for Sanskrit word Shishya, meaning student, disciple, learner or seeker. The main tenets of his teachings are given below:

God

Guru Nanak's exposition of God is summed up in the basic formula called *Mul Mantra*:

Ik Omkar, Satnam, Karta Purakh, Nirbhau Nirvair, Akālmurti, Ajuni, Saibhang, Gurprasad.

There is one God. God is truth. He is the Creator. God is without fear. He is without animosity. He is the immortal being. He is unborn. He is self-existent. God is realized by the grace of the Guru. Guru Nanak says :

By uttering the Lord's Name, the *Mul Mantra*, provides elixir leading to the attainment of God.[1] God to Guru Nanak was a fact and reality. He could argue about God. He could affirm God. His vision was cosmic. God is formless and omnipotent. He acts independently. He knows all and everything. He alone is the bestower of gifts. He is an ocean of mercy, friend of man, healer of sinner, cherisher of the poor, and destroyer of sorrow. He is wise, generous, beautiful and bountiful.

Nanak says even if he knew God, he could not describe Him. He

[1] *Adi Granth*, 1040.

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is great and His bounties are great. He looks after everything. God is absolutely just. His grace is for all, but he gives as He wishes. He is omnipresent. The individual self is in God, and God is in the individual self. God and his devotees are one and there is nothing between them.

Ātam māhi rām, Rām māhi ātam

God and the individual souls are related like the ocean and its waves
The drop of water is in the sea, and the sea is in the drop of water.

Sāgar mai būnd, Būnd mai sāgar

In Christianity God is considered father and man as a son. Father and son seldom remain together during whole life. Nanak went a step further. He considered man as wife and God as man. In Nanak's time husband and wife could be separated only by death. There was no divorce, and desertion was rare.

God as husband

Guru Nanak considered himself a girl wedded to God. The Guru says :

1. "My Guru-God has brought me into union with Himself. I, a mere girl, have thus obtained the spouse in my home."[1]
2. "The Beloved delights in me day and night, for, God is my husband and I am ever a bride."[2]
3. God is the only spouse, all other beings are His brides.

Ekā pursh nār sabāi[3]

Nanak says : A woman may be stupid, dirty, black and impure-minded; yet if she possesses merit, she meets her beloved; otherwise Nanak, the woman is to blame.[4]

[In the *Adi Granth* the word Mahila for the Guru became Mohalla.]
God pervades the whole universe.

Kudrat diseh, kudrat suniye, kudrat bhau sukh sār,
Kudrat pātāli, ākāsi, kudrat sarb ākār.[5]

In nature we see Him. In nature do we hear Him speak.
In nature lies the essence of joy and peace.
The lower and upper regions, comprise nature,
The entire nature is His embodiment.

[1] *Adi Granth*, 1109.
[2] ibid, 1110.
[3] ibid, 933.
[4] Macauliffe, I, 85, 112, 195.
[5] *Adi Granth*, 464.

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Nanak proclaimed that God never appeared in human form.[1]

1. Nanak's God is both *Nirgun* (absolute) and *Sagun* (personal). He is spread over the whole universe. He can also be loved as a being.
2. God is one and cannot be represented as Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Rama or Krishna.
3. He belongs to all living beings.
4. He can be realized through love, devotion and good deeds.
5. He can be worshipped only by singing His praises and constant repetition of His Name.

A question might arise who created God, and whether God could be seen. Nanak put a limit to reasoning in matters spiritual. Intuition or a spontaneous and a sudden flash of light revealed the truth more easily than long arguments, disputations, and reasoning of cold intellect. There was an unseen spiritual presence beyond the visible universe. Nanak did not consider religion as a mental exercise. It was faith, a practical way of life for the realization of God and self. God could not be seen, but his presence could be felt like the pain in body or pleasure in the heart or the fragrance in a flower, air in the atmosphere, or electricity in various forms. Butter cannot be located in milk, but it is there. Thus God could be seen through His creation. The creed of Nanak was not monotheism (belief in one God), but pantheism (belief that the whole universe is God).

Nām mārg

Hinduism prescribed threefold path of Gian Marg (knowledge), Karam Marg (action), and Bhakti Marg (devotion) to attain salvation. Buddhism believed in Karam Marg (action) alone. Islam laid emphasis on belief in one God, Prophet Muhammad and the *Qurān*. Nanak does not seem to have come into contact with Christianity. Nanak rejected all the high roads laid down by older religions. He adopted an independent path, the simplest possible. It was *Nām Mārg* or *Simran* or dedication to the Name, the True Name. Nanak said that God was not a distant deity. "The beloved is not far from thee, behold Him in thy heart." One could call Him for guidance and help as one would call a relative or a friend in time of need. By *Simran* God becomes a constant companion of every individual. Nanak therefore sang the Name. He preached the Name. He dwelt in the Name.

[1] *Ba tan paivand na pazirad. The Dabistan*, 225.

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He said the world was ailing. The Divine Name was the medicine. Without the Name life was barren.[1] This conception gave new hope, new faith, new life and new expectations to the depressed, dejected and downcast people of Panjab. They found that the Name, the True Name, was the cure of all the ills and sufferings of humanity. In the light and beauty divine one transcended all worldly woes and worries. It was a simple, sublime and serene message.

Nanak's God was personal and merciful. He helped those who believed in Him sincerely. True devotion, complete surrender of the self and thoughtful, constant *Namsimran* as opposed to mechanical repetition and ritualism, would enable an individual to realize God. "Efface thyself so that you may obtain the Bridegroom." *Sat Nam* (the True Name) was the remedy for all human ills and for all human happiness in this world and hereafter. Mohsin Fani writes: "The *bani* of Nanak, viz., his hymns serve the purpose of prayer, admonition and counsel. Most of his sayings are on the greatness of God and His holiness."[2] He further says that the vocabulary of Nanak is that of the Panjabi Jat or villager or rustic. "His disciples have no regard for the Sanskrit language."[3] Thus repetition of the Name silently and inwardly was the beginning of spiritual life. The Name brought one into harmony with the universe. A healing process would start to cure one's ills.

Repetition of the Name is called *Simran*. It is to be done with great care and thoughtfulness.

Prabh ki ustat karoh sant mit
Sāvdhān ikāgar chit.[4]

[Holy man, friend praise God attentively and with an alert mind.] Nanak says: "Thinking good is thinking of God."[5]

Nam marg can be practised in two ways, through words, by keeping it in mind all the time, and by actions, i.e., serving God's creatures. The Nam Marg produces threefold effect. It is purifying, as it keeps one away from vice. It is illuminating as it imparts knowledge and beauty, truth and virtue. It is unifying as it draws the devotee nearer God.[6]

[1]Dhansari, *Adi Granth*, 786.
[2]*The Dabistan*, 224.
[3]ibid.
[4]*Adi Granth*, 295.
[5]*Rag Manjh, Asht Padian, Adi Granth*, 116; *Rāg Gauri, Asht Padian*, 224.
[6]Macauliffe, I, 135, 155, 171.

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The Guru

Guru is an ancient and common term in Hinduism. In Hindu thought Guru is both spiritual and temporal. A temporal Guru may be a pandit, elderly scholar or teacher. A spiritual guru is a religious guide or teacher quite different from all kinds of priests well-versed in sacred literature. Guru Nanak adopted this term, but gave it a special meaning and significance. In Sikhism Guru is a divine master, saviour, prophet, spiritual enlightener, who is as perfect as God, but not God. The guru is a God-illuminated person through whom God reveals Himself.[1]

The Guru's association gives peace, tranquility and harmony with everything in the universe. The true guru leads his disciples to the presence of God. He is a bridge between man and God. He is the stair-case to lift a person to God. He is illuminating like the sun which never rises and never sets. The guru raises the falling spirit of his followers and inspires them with hope and confidence. Gurbani is God's voice. It is the living fountain. It enables a person to enter the realm of truth, beauty and amity. In Sikh religion the guru does not bestow boons and benediction. Nor does he plead in favour of his disciples.

Nanak claimed neither divinity nor prophethood, yet he regarded the guru essential for the realization of God. It was only through him that an individual could have communion with God. "Men shall not be emancipated without instruction by the Guru, even though he performed hundreds and thousands of ceremonies, all would still be darkness without the Guru." There was no necessity to worship any gods or goddesses. The Guru says in *Japji*:

"The word of the Guru is the inner music;
The word of the Guru is the highest scripture;
The word of the Guru is all pervading;
The Guru is *Shiv*, the Guru is *Vishnu* as well as *Brahma*;
The Guru is the mother of goddess."[2]

In Sri Rag Nanak says:

"Everybody else is subject to error, only the Guru and God are without error."[3]

The Guru in Sikhism is both human and divine.

Rām Rām sabh ko kahāe,

[1] *Baba Nanak khud ra bandah shamurdah. The Dabistan*, 225.
[2] *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, 31.
[3] Teja Singh, *Asa Di Var*, 14.

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Kahiā Rām na hoe,
Gurparsādi Rām man vasāe, Tān phal pāvae koe.[1]

[All utter Ram Ram, but one cann't get Ram by saying. Ram can live in heart with Guru's grace, only then one can get the fruit.]

"His knowledge is acquired
Under the Guru's instruction;
Man learns that God is everywhere."

The problem of how to find the True Guru (*Sat Guru*) is thus solved by Guru Nanak:

"Only that man finds peace of mind,
Who meets the true Guru,
And enshrines the Name of God in his heart;
And that too, Nanak, if God sends his Grace."[2]

In *Asa ki Var* Nanak says :

"If a hundred moons rise,
And a thousand suns shine;
There would still be pitch darkness,
Without the Guru's light."

Nanak declared that his own Guru was God.[3] He said : "I speak as the words of God come to me." "I have said what He commands me to speak." "Listen, the Eternal God Lord is my Guru." "My Satguru is eternal. He is neither born nor dies."[4] Nanak demanded complete surrender from his disciples who would attain salvation through the superior spiritual power of the Guru.

Nanak says: "The Guru's instruction is jewels and gems: by serving him his disciples find them.

There is no place of pilgrimage equal to the Guru; The tank of consolation is contained in the Guru.

The Guru is a river whence pure water is ever obtained, and by which the filth of evil inclination is washed away.

He who findeth the True Guru hath obtained perfect bathing, which maketh him a god out of a beast or a ghost.

He who is imbued with the true Name obtaineth it; that Guru is called sandal.

[1] *Adi Granth*, 491.
[2] Teja Singh, *Asa Di Var*, IX, 82.
[3] *Adi Granth*, Sorath XI, Mohalla I; Gurdas's *Var*, XIII, 25.
[4] Daljeet Singh, *Sikhism*, 1979, pp. 248-49.

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Fix thine attention on His feet by whose odour vegetables are perfumed.

Through the Guru man obtaineth real life, and through the Guru man departeth to God's home.

Nanak, through the Guru man is absorbed in the True One; through the Guru man obtaineth the special dignity of deliverance."[1]

Creation of universe

About the creation of universe Nanak says :

Sache te pavana bhaiya
pavanai te jalu hoi, jal te
tribhavan sājiya ghat ghat
joti samoi.[2]

[From Truth emanated air, From air emanated water, From water emanated the three worlds. Then He merged Himself in His creation.]

Guru Nanak in Maru Sohila holds that nobody knows the hour of creation. There was complete darkness.[3]

Nanak says the universe is not self-existent. The universe was created by God. It is dependent upon Him. Whatever is in existence it is there by His will.

Heaven and hell

Hinduism and Islam mention seven regions of heaven and seven of hell. Nanak considers them countless. He says :

There are lakhs of regions, Upper and nether both, There cannot be any count of them.

Mohsin Fani wrote: Nanak in his hymns says that there are many skies and earths.[4]

Nanak's conception of Karma

Nanak believed in the Law of *Karma*. He asserted that good deeds bore good fruit and bad deeds bore bad fruit. As a man soweth so shall he reap. God has created virtue as well as vice. A man should pursue the path of virtue and struggle against evil. Everything is not preordained. Man is free to choose between virtue and vice. Vice gives

[1] *Prabhati*, vide Macauliffe, I. 148-49.
[2] *Adi Granth*, 19.
[3] Macauliffe, I, 116 fn. 2; 207.
[4] *The Dabistan*, 225.

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temporary pleasure. Virtue provides lasting happiness, but vice is more attractive than virtue.

On seeing a rich Shaikh travelling in a palanquin, Mardana asked Guru Nanak :

"Who created this man who rideth in a cosy sedan chair, while the bearers have no shoes to their feet ? Their legs are naked while they shampoo and fan him." The Guru replied :

"They who performed austerities in their former lives, are now kings and receive tribute on earth. They who were then wearied, are now shampooed by others."

The Guru further observed: "O Mardana, whoever is born hath come naked from his mother's womb and joy or misery is the result of actions in previous states of existence."[1]

In *Japji* Nanak says:

"Words do not the saint or sinner make,
Action alone is written in the book of fate,
What we sow that alone we take,
O Nanak, be saved or for ever transmigrate."

Nanak held that *kām* (lust), *karodh* (anger), *lobh* (greed), *moh* (attachment) and *ahankār* (conceit) were the five diseases from which all living beings were suffering. But man was endowed with the capacity to overcome them. "Ego is a chronic disease, but its cure is to be found within it."[2]

The Guru defines a truly religious person thus:

Religion consisteth not in a patched coat,
or in a Jogi's staff, or in ashes smeared over the body;
Religion consisteth not in earrings worn,
or in a shaven head, or in the blowing of horns.
Religion consisteth not in mere words;
He who looketh on all men as equal is religious ;
Religion consisteth not in wandering to tombs
or places of cremation or sitting in attitudes of contemplation.
Religion consisteth not in wandering in foreign countries,
or in bathing in places of pilgrimages.
Abide pure amidst the impurities of the world;

[1]Macauliffe, I, 59.
[2]Gopal Singh, Translation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, I, 28.

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Thus shall thou find the way of religion."[1]

Nanak preached that law of Karma could be modified by the grace of God and the Guru. God can destroy Karma.

Grace

The law of Karma is strict and hard. But the Lord is not cruel or barbarian. He is generous and gracious. He sends his grace through the Guru, who prescribed the worship of the Name. In case of a sinner's repentance, the Guru procures him God's grace and mercy. Blind are not those who have no eyes. Nanak, blind are they who go astray from the path of virtue.

The Guru laments at the wastage of precious life.

Raini gavai soi kai,
Divasu gavaia khai,
Hire jaisa Janamu hai
Kaudi badle jae.[2]

[Night is lost in sleep, day in eating; The diamond-like life is given away for a kauri.]

Transmigration of soul, Nirvân or Sach Khand

Like Hinduism Nanak believed that soul did not die. It neither grows nor decays. It is neither old nor young. It is as pure and luminous as God, but with a difference. Soul lives in a body which is dependent upon material things. Soul is influenced by five senses. Hence it acquires some impurity. On the death of the body soul gets into a new body, but it carries some impurity of the previous life with it. This impurity can be washed away by Guru's guidance and God's grace.

Nanak declared that soul emanated from the absolute, the fountain of light, the pure source. There were eighty-four lakhs souls or forms of existence. This number neither increased nor decreased. According to the old belief the number of souls was as follows:

17 lakhs immovable creatures like trees
10 lakhs aquatic animals
11 lakhs creeping animals
10 lakhs feathered animals
32 lakhs quadrupeds
4 lakhs human beings

[1]Macauliffe, I, 60.
[2]*Adi Granth*, 156.

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Thus the number of human souls is only a fraction of creation. Death does not mean extinction. It marks a stage in the journey of the soul. Life, says Nanak, is as the shadow of the passing bird, but the soul of man is, as the potter's wheel, ever circling on its pivots.[1] Soul being a part of God never dies. It cannot be destroyed. The body perishes, but the soul survives. It assumes various forms in different bodies according to one's deeds. It never changes through numerous births and deaths. The wall of selfishness or egoism stands between soul and God. According to Guru Nanak salvation or deliverance from the transmigration can be attained through good deeds and by the grace of the personal, absolute God. Grace can be invoked by *Namsimran* or worship of God with love and devotion.

The soul is a divine spark. It should reunite with the source from which it emanated. As long as this goal is not achieved, it remains unhappy, because it is separated from the source. During its union with the body the soul becomes impure. This impurity or duality or second love hinders the return of the soul to the eternal fountain of light. There is good and bad, virtue and vice in this world. The body is attracted towards *maya*, illusion, evil and vice.

The ultimate goal of soul in Sikhism is not heaven, a land of wealth, wine and women. In his hymns Nanak held *Nirvan* or *Sach Khand* or absorption in the immortal as the highest goal of human life. It is a state of ever-lasting bliss and beauty and eternal happiness. *Nirvan* can be attained by constant meditation on God, by upright character, and service of all living beings. The human soul then blends with God as water mixes with water.

As water blends with water, when two streams their waves unite,
The light of human life doth blend with God's celestial light.
No transmigrations then await the weary human soul;
It hath attained its resting place,
Its peaceful crowning goal.[2]

According to Nanak all living beings have two bodies, tangible and intangible, touchable and untouchable, visible and invisible. The former is the body and the latter is the soul. The soul separates from the body at death. It goes on taking birth after birth unless *Nirvan* is attained.

[1]**Rag Asa** in the *Adi Granth*, quoted by Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, 39.

[2]**Macauliffe**, I, LXV.

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In *Japji* Nanak lays down five stages in the spiritual progress of man:

(*i*) *Dharam Khand* in which a man tries to realize his connection with God and disciplines his mind.

(*ii*) *Gian Khand* in which the disciple acquires knowledge and tries to understand why God has sent him into this world

(*iii*) *Sharam Khand* in which the disciple attempts advancing towards God to meet Him. This is the beginning of action.

(*iv*) *Karam Khand* in which the disciple's godly life and his desire to meet God is appreciated by the Almighty, and He confers His grace on the disciple who fully devotes himself to action.

(*v*) *Sach Khand* in which the disciple arrives at his destination, meets his Beloved and merges himself into eternity.

Thus Nanak says : In the soil of your mind sow the seed of good deeds and water the soil with God's name.

Nanak's attitude towards avatars and divinities

Nanak did not believe in divinities and incarnations. He did not believe that God took human form to protect the good and destroy evil. Nanak's God was formless and birthless. He sang the glory and greatness of only One True Lord. Mohsin Fani says: "He had no faith in idols and idol temples. Nanak praised Musalmans. He also praised *Avatars*, gods and goddesses of Hindus. But he did not consider all of them creator (*khaliq*), but declared them the created (*makhluq*)."[1] In *Japji* he says: "One maya in union with God gave birth to three acceptable children. One of them is creator, the second the provider, the third performeth the function of destroyer."

This is Hindu Trinity pure and simple. But he says that these are not independent beings because "as it pleaseth God, He directeth them by this order."[2] Nanak further says: "By hearing the Name man becometh as Shiva, Brahma and Indra."[3]

Nanak mainly attacked not these divinities so much as those who only concentrated upon them by ignoring the True Lord.

The Vedas and the Quran

Nanak did not denounce the scriptures such as the *Vedas* and the

[1] *The Dabistan*, 223.
[2] *Japji*, XXX.
[3] ibid, IX.

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Quran. He said: "The four books and the four *Vedas* which were promulgated in the world, came down from high under the orders of the Lord God."[1] Nanak further said:

"Ved, Kitab kaho mat jhūte,
Jhūtā so jo nā vichāre."

[Do not call the *Vedas* and the *Quran* false. False is one who does not follow them.]

Nanak condemned the mechanical recitations from these scriptures without realizing the Immortal Lord.

Pilgrimages, penances, fasts, and renunciation and supersitions

Nanak was not opposed to pilgrimages of holy places. A visit to a sacred shrine and meeting pious people did ennoble the mind. But it did not wash away one's past sins. If the pilgrimage was made with this object, it was in vain. The real pilgrimage implied bathing in the holy Name.

Nanak denounced penances and fasts, He was opposed to the torture of body to get salvation. He said that human body was the sublime temple of God. He placed infinite light within it. It was not to be tortured to realise Him.[2] Guru Nanak says:

'Let Jogis practise jog, let gluttons practise gluttony;
Let penitents practise penance, and rub and bathe themselves at places of pilgrimages;
But let me listen to Thy songs, O Beloved, if anyone will sit and sing them to me."
Nanak declared: "Through fasting and penance the mind is not softened."[3]

In *Japji* the Guru says:

"Pilgrimage, austerities, mercy, and alms-giving on general and special occasions,
Whosoever performeth may obtain some little honour;
But he who heareth and obeyeth and loveth God in his heart,
Shall wash off his impurity in the place of pilgrimage within him."

At another place the Guru says:

"Burnt offerings, sacred feasts, and the reading of the *Puranas*,

[1]Khazan Singh, *Asa ki Var*, 343.
[2]*Adi Granth*, 1256.
[3]ibid, 905.

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If pleasing to God, are acceptable."[1]

The obvious conclusion is that these things by themselves are of no value and that they can be useful only when they are performed in a spirit of true devotion. He denounced the perversions, not the practices.

Nanak declared that nobody was high and nobody was low. Only fools and idiots claimed superiority over others.

The people who renounced the world appeared to Nanak unfit to face the challenge of life. He declared that such men were not doing any good or justice either to themselves or to society.

Nanak criticised useless yogis and ignorant mullan:

Makhattu hoi kai kān paṛāe

[Unfit to earn livelihood many got their ears split.]

Giān vihunā gāwe gīt

Bhukhā mullān ghare masīt.[2]

[Without knowledge the hungry Muslim priest sings songs and converts his home into a mosque.]

Nanak regarded ancestral worship through *sharadhs*, evil eye, *mahurat*, omens and worship of graves, idols, statues, and tombs as superstitious. Nanak says: One does not serve his ancestors when they are alive, but offers them feasts when they are dead. Tell me what will the poor parents get when crows and dogs have eaten the feast offered.[3]

Caste system

In Nanak's time Hindu society was based on caste and was divided into countless watertight compartments. Men were considered high and low on account of their birth and not according to their deeds. Equality of human beings was a dream. There was no spirit of national unity except feelings of community fellowship. In Nanak's views a man's love of God was the criterion to judge whether a person was good or bad, high or low. As the caste system was not based on divine love, he condemned it. "Preposterous is caste, vain the distinction of birth. The Lord gives shelter to all beings."[4] Nanak aimed at creat-

[1]Macauliffe, I, 28.
[2]*Adi Granth*, 1245.
[3]ibid, 332.
[4]ibid, 83.

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ing a casteless and classless society similar to the modern type of socialist society in which all were equal and where one member did not exploit the other. Nanak insisted that every Sikh home should serve as a place of love and devotion, a true guest house (*Sachdharamshala*). Every Sikh was enjoined to welcome a traveller or a needy person and to share his meals and other comforts with him. Bhai Gurdas says:

"Wherever the holy feet of Guru Nanak touched, dharamshalas sprang into existence."[1]

The sacred thread

The sacred thread had a strong link with caste. Some writers are of the opinion that Nanak tried to abolish this custom. They quote a hymn of Nanak which he uttered at the time of thread-wearing ceremony at the age of nine:

"Out of the cotton of mercy make threads of temperateness and twisting them with righteous zeal tie in them the knot of continence.

The sacred thread thus formed will be for the soul, if thou hast it, O Pundit, put it on me.

It will not break, or get soiled, or be burnt or lost.

Blessed is the man, O Nanak, who goes about with such a thread on his neck."[2]

It is not clear whether Nanak sought to abolish the custom altogether at that young age. This much is certain that he denounced the wearer's claim to superiority on the basis of the thread alone.

The middle path

Between the ascetic and the epicurean, Nanak chose the middle path or the *Grihastha Ashram* or the life of a householder. It was an ideal path as it offered opportunities for social, material and spiritual growth of an integrated man. Even the ascetics had to knock at the door of a householder for food and clothing, etc. The life of a householder offered a purposeful living and was conducive to social welfare. The family life was thus declared as an essential part of the Sikh way of life. Guru Nanak himself led the householder's life. He had not renounced family ties after enlightenment when he went on extensive tours. At the end of every great journey he joined his family, parents,

[1]Bhai Gurdas, *Var I*, Pauri 27.
[2]Teja Singh, *Asa Di Var*, 98-99.

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wife, children and other relatives. His parents died before he had finished his travels. He settled down at Kartarpur with his wife and two sons. Nanak condemned asceticism and renunciation of the world. A householder was equally acceptable to God as a hermit. The secular business did not stand in the way of emancipation. Live in the world, but lead a good life, and help others to do so, he asserted. *Sadh sangat* or association with virtuous and holy men would help people in doing so. Work, worship and entertain others (*kirt karo*, *Nam japo* and *wand chhako*) was the motto placed before his disciples. Earn by honest labour and share the earnings with the needy.

Nanak believed in the unity of mankind and stood for the lofty ideal of the greatest good of all. This was his socialism and international justice based on righteousness. He believed in universal spiritual republicanism in which poverty was banished and war outlawed. By his own personal example he taught the people to live together as brothers. He himself dined with people of all castes and classes, great and small, Hindus and Muslims alike. In his *langar* all sat together and ate the same food by sitting on the floor.

Education

Nanak was clear in his mind as to the nature of education which should be imparted to the nation's youth. As the educational institutions of Hindus had been suppressed, Nanak considered spiritual instruction essential to retain peace of mind. He condemned purely secular education: "One may read cartloads of books. He may read camel-loads. He may read boatfulls. He may read books which will fill a cellar. One may read for days, even for months. One may read for his whole life, even for all his breaths. Nanak, only one thing will count. The rest is all an exercise in egoism." It is love of humanity.

Nanak lays down the qualifications of a teacher: "A teacher may be termed educated when he dispenses knowledge spontaneously. He digests what he reads and arrives at the reality and fixes his attention on the Name of God. The egoist sells knowledge, earns poison and eats poison. The fool does not understand the word and is steeped in ignorance. But if an educated man is greedy, avaricious and vain, he is to be termed as a fool."[1]

Nanak denounced teachers who lived on the offerings of their pupils.

[1]Bhai Jodh Singh, Guru Nanak Quincentenary Number, 1969, *The Spokesman Weekly*, New Delhi, 34.

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"Do not fall at the feet of him, who calls himself a *Guru* or *Pir* and goes abegging."

Nanak expected high standards of morality, spirituality and intellectual attainments from a teacher. He must practise what he taught. Only then he could inspire his disciples. "The egoists indulge in mere talk; they do not practise what they say," declared Nanak.[1]

Nanak observed: "Comprehension of learning consists in doing good to others. Mere reading of religious texts without understanding and without acting up to them is not of much avail. Nothing approaches the knowledge of Truth but true conduct excels it."[2] Learning without realising the purpose of life and singing the praise of God increased egoism. God and man lived together with the partition wall of egoism between them.

Charity

Giving away something in the service of others was a necessary part of a Sikh's life. He was expected to make offerings to the Guru, to Guru's community mess and to the needy. Nanak insisted that one should earn one's living by the sweat of one's brow. In Sarang ki Var he says:

Ghāl, khāe, kichh hāthon de,
Nanak rāho pachhani se

[Earn by toil, eat and something give away. O Nanak! such a person knows the real way.]

Control over pleasures of senses

Nanak advocated control over five base elements in man—*kam*, *karodh*, *lobh*, *moh*, and *ahankar*. He strongly pleaded against the glamour and glitter of wealth, wine, women and war, as these things kept man away from God.

Yoga

Guru Nanak was not against yoga. He wanted to adjust it to meet the needs of a householder. In his view Hat hyoga did not suit family men. He favoured Sahaj yoga. It gives mental poise. It keeps the balance of mind. It helps the householder to perform his duties properly. Nanak says:

[1]Bhai Jodh Singh, Guru Nanak Quincentenary Number, 1969, *The Spokesman Weekly*, 34.
[2]ib'd.

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Jo kichu karāe bhalā kari māno
Sahaj jog nidhi pāwo[1]

[Whatever He does, accept that as good and gain the treasure of Sahaj Yoga.]

Nanak further says:

Dekhi acharaju rahe bismādi
Ghati ghati sur nar sahaj samādhi.[2]

[Through sahaj samadhi one beholds wonders and is elevated to the realm of sublimity.]

Love of humanity

Nanak loved all human beings, irrespective of religious or geographical limits or barriers. He said:

"Among the low my caste is lowest,
Among the lowly I am the lowest,
Sayeth Nanak, I keep company of such men,
And have no ambition to emulate great men;
Because where the lowly are looked after,
Is the place blessed by the Supreme Master."

He stressed the principle of service of mankind:

"In the world service of the people is supreme,
That will secure a seat for you in God's esteem."[3]

Nanak proclaimed that the cultivation of humility was necessary for the elimination of the ego. God had created everybody and therefore nobody should malign anybody else. He said:

"Know that God dwells in all souls,
So become the dust of the feet of all,
In this way practise the love of God,
Regard your life, soul, body and wealth as His property."[4]

Nanak held the sanctity of human life in high esteem. He said life originated from a pure source, the light of the Lord, and therefore it remained essentially pure. "O mind, thou has emanated from the light of Lord." He said that in the course of life all the sins committed by man could be washed away. A sinner was not doomed for ever nor was he saved till eternity. He was rewarded and punished according to his deeds. Nanak says:

[1]Bhai Jodh Singh, Guru Nanak Quincentenary Number, 1969, *The Spokesman Weekly*, New Delhi, 34.
[2]*Adi Granth*, 416.
[3]ibid, 26.
[4]ibid, 866.

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"The virtuous and the vicious are not mere echoes,
For, one carries along all that one does."[1]

Manmukh and gurmukh

Guru Nanak aimed at converting manmukh Sikhs into gurmukh Sikhs. A manmukh believes in enjoyment of physical pleasure. Soul has no meaning for him. A manmukh person is selfish. He is centred in himself alone. He is not interested in his fellow beings. He is full of pride and arrogance. He frowns upon lower class people, and flatters his superiors. He is full of envy, jealousy, and hatred and cannot tolerate praise of others. He has no love for God and godly persons.

A gurmukh controls his ego. He follows the path leading to the Guru and God. He keeps his five senses in check and is above temptations. A gurmukh shuns falsehood and loves truth. He believes in doing good to others.

Guru Nanak in Sidh Gosht lays down the following four qualities of a gurmukh:

Gurmukh shāstar simrit Ved,
Gurmukh pāwe ghat ghat bhed,
Gurmukh vair, virod gwawe
Gurmukh sagli ganat mitāwe.[2]

[A gurmukh knows Vedas and other holy scriptures. A gurmukh realizes the presence of God in everything. A gurmukh is free from hatred and malice. A gurmukh never thinks that anybody has wronged him.

The ideal man

Guru Nanak's ideal man must possess the following qualifications:

1. He is a householder and discharges his duties towards himself, his family and society. He is friendly and sympathetic towards the welfare of others. He is a *yogi* and *bhogi*.
2. He is a man of God. He repeats God's name all the time silently and attentively. They are not pure who keep their bodies clean. Pure are they in whose heart God dwells. By associating with holy men they curb anger, greed, lust, passion and conceit.[3]

[1]Gopal Singh, I, xxxiii.
[2]*Adi Granth*, 942.
[3]ibid, 414.

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Uttam sangat uttam hoe.[1]

3. He should resist evil, injustice, tyranny and wickedness.
4. He should look upon others as his superiors.

Manda jāne āp ko awer bhala sansār.[2]

5. He should earn living by labour and should share his earnings with the needy.[3]
6. *He believes in Nām (God), Dān (charity), Ishnān (cleanliness).*
7. *Hak prāyā Nanaka us sour us ghāe*
 Gur pīr hama tan bhare jan murdār na khāe.[4]

[What belongs to others is like pork and beef. The Guru and a Muslim saint will consider ill-gotten wealth as eating a corpse.]

Women

Woman was held in an inferior position. She was kept in *purdah*. Child marriage and *Sati* were common due to the exigency of times. No education was imparted to them.

Women, therefore, received great consideration from Nanak. They were allowed to attend his sermons along with men. *Purdah* was discouraged. Women joined in the chorus in singing hymns. For *langar* men brought provisions and fuel wood, while women cooked food. Men and women both served meals to the *pangat*. Nanak condemned *Sati* or the custom of self-immolation of widows on funeral pyres of their dead husbands. Guru said: "How can they be inferior when they give birth to men? Women as well as men share in the grace of God and are equally responsible for their actions to Him."[5]

Nanak raised the status of women by asserting that as a wife won over her husband by her beauty, accomplishments, chastity, love, service and devotion, so could God be attained. Nanak declared:

"In a woman we are conceived, of a woman we are born. To a woman we are betrothed and married. Through a woman new relationships are formed. The woman continues the race. When one woman dies, we look for another. The woman carries on the tradition. Why should we call her evil of whom are born kings. *Manda kiyon ākhiye jo jamme rājān.* A woman is born of a woman. There is no human being who is not born of a woman. Nanak, True God alone is inde-

[1] *Adi Granth*, 414.
[2] ibid, 991.
[3] ibid, 1245.
[4] ibid, 141.
[5] *Var Asa*, XIX.

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pendent of a woman."[1]

Guru Nanak condemned the practice of *Sati*. He declared:

A *Sati* is not one who burns herself on the funeral pyre of her husband. A *Sati* is one, O Nanak, who dies with the sheer shock of separation.[2]

Nanak believed in monogamy. On his return home from his tour of the east after twelve years, Nanak stayed in the jungle five kilometres away from his home town Talwandi. The Guru's father and mother waited on him and tried their best to persuade him to stay at home and stop from wandering any longer. Nanak refused all the imploring of his parents, because the comfortable living was not his idea of what life demanded of him. In the course of arguments it was suggested that they would get him another more attractive and younger wife. Nanak replied: "Father dear, it is God who arrangeth marriages. He maketh no mistake, and those whom He hath once joined He jointh for ever." The obvious inference is that Nanak was a believer in monogamy. Bhai Gurdas also drew the same conclusion when he wrote: "Be chaste with one wife."[3]

Sikhism different from other reform movements

Although Nanak was a saint of the Bhakti school, yet in certain respects Nanak's religion differed from other reform movements as of Ramanand, Kabir, Chaitanya and Gorakhnath:

1. The latter laid stress on fundamentals of Hinduism, believing that their acceptance would ultimately bring about social readjustment. Sikhism from the very beginning concentrated on social reform and repetition of the Name.

2. Conception of God in Sikhism is different from that of other Bhakti leaders. The Sikh God is Akal Purakh. He is without body, formless and timeless. The other leaders believed in Rama and Krishna being incarnations of God. Nanak objected to it as the human body was subject to deterioration and death. Besides Nanak's emphasis on love of God was stronger and deeper than that of other Bhakti leaders. To Nanak God's love was whole existence.

3. Many bhaktas though firmly believing in the unity of God could not oppose the worship of Shiva or Vishnu often represented by some

[1] *Adi Granth*, 473; Teja Singh, *Asa Di Var*, 110-11.
[2] Rag Suhi, *Adi Granth*, 787.
[3] Gurdas, *Var, VI*, 8.

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idol or picture. They felt it was easier for the simple-minded and illiterate people to concentrate on something concrete which they could see with their own eyes. Nanak rejected idol worship because the idols were considered as God rather than as His representation for the purpose of concentration.

4. Sikh religion had no mythology, no traditions and no ambiguity. It was plain and simple. Believe in one God, have faith in the Guru and lead a good life. Then success in this world and salvation after death is yours. The other reformers mainly concerned themselves with salvation of the soul.

5. In Sikhism renunciation of the world was prohibited, while the other sects advocated it. Nanak also rejected celibacy.

6. It was Nanak alone who founded the institution of Guruship for the spread of Bhakti movement.

7. At several places Guru Nanak established *sangats* or *dharamshalas* and *pangats* or *langars* to serve as an association of his disciples to meet regularly to sing the praises of God. No such thing was done by others.

8. No other Bhakti leader dislodged Sanskrit from the position of its being the sacred language of Hinduism, though they preached in the local tongue. Nanak cut himself off absolutely from Sanskrit as it was not understood by the common people.

9. Guru Nanak aimed at uplifting the individual as well as building a nation. The other Bhakti leaders laid emphasis on individual alone. The result was that whereas the Sikhs developed themselves into a powerful community and ruled in the country for nearly a hundred years, the other sects either disappeared or remained where they were in the lifetime of their founders.

10. Sikhism laid great stress on interdining and recitation; the others on individual dining and on modes of ecstasy like dancing or performing *Arti*, etc.

11. Nanak wanted to establish union of the individual with the universal. His conception of union transcended the union between male and female. He considered man as wife and God as man. It was the spiritual union.

12. The mysticism and Sant traditions of other Bhaktas had some tinge of Buddhism, Nath Yogis, Hathyoga and Sufism. Nanak's mysticism was plain and simple, clear and precise. It was devotion to God alone.

13. In matters like birth, marriage, death, and pilgrimage, etc.

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Nanak rejected the old priestly practices and rituals and insisted on simple and economical ceremonies, which could be performed by non-Brahmans.

14. Nanak travelled more extensively than others inside the country and abroad, which no other Bhakti leader did. It widened his outlook.

15. Kabir was a mystic. His thoughts and ideas appealed to the people in isolation. Kabir's popularity depended upon his witty remarks, wise sayings, and striking examples. Guru Nanak's principles had a continuity, and his words and expressions could be understood more easily by illiterate peasantry and working classes.

16. The essential quality of a bhakta was love. This love was directed towards avatars of Vishnu and tantric yoga by most of the bhaktas. Nanak directed it to the Supreme Almighty Lord. The former involved difficulties and sufferings. Nanak's love of God was simple.

17. The idea of guruship was well-established in India, but its transformation into a living faith had not been a familiar feature. A religious institution disintegrated after the death of its founder. Sikhism escaped this fate.

Was Nanak a reformer or a revolutionary?

A social and religious revolutionary destroys the existing social institutions held dear by the people. He strives to build a new order on the ruins of the old. He censures and casts off the important customs and performances prevailing in his age. He calls upon people to adopt the new ways preached and propagated by him, ignoring the common practices and traditions then in use. His pace is fast and he has no patience to wait for a long time. He puts something dazzling and blazing before the masses. A revolutionary does not care for the sentiments of other people. He boldly incurs the displeasure of the supporters of old institutions and fears no opposition to his plans. Lenin introduced communism in Russia by sacrificing fifty lakhs Russian people.

A reformer makes an attempt to remove the corrupt practices and customs and modifies them to meet the needs of changed times and environments. He simplifies old beliefs and gives the people a slogan which consoles the afflicted hearts and gives them fresh hopes of deliverance from sufferings and misfortunes. In his reforming zeal he does not injure the feelings of others and advances slowly by winning their cooperation and goodwill.

In the light of these remarks we will try to analyse Guru Nanak's

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personality and work to determine whether he was a revolutionary or a reformer.

Some writers like Macauliffe, Bhai Kahan Singh and Teja Singh are of the opinion that Guru Nanak was a revolutionary because he tried to destroy all the prevalent religious institutions as well as the structures of society of his time. They hold that Guru's bitterest attack was aimed at the annihilation of caste system, and that he tried to build a new society in place of the old one. Payne and Gokul Chand Narang are of the view that Nanak belonged to the great family of Bhakti reformers. Ganda Singh says that "the Guru was not a mere reformer but the founder of a new religion."[1] Indubhushan Banerjee deals with this topic at length in 33 pages,[2] but he mainly dwells on caste system, pilgrimages and divinities. Kirpal Singh Narang in his *Hi tory of Punjab* has not gone beyond Indubhushan. G.S. Chhabra[3] has casually discussed this subject in a separate section.

We will now examine it somewhat in detail.

1. Nanak's denunciation of caste was not revolutionary in character. His opposition to caste was so mild and appealing that no Brahman or any other high caste Hindu organised any resistance against Nanak. On the contrary, he was loved by one and all. Malik Bhago of Sayyidpur simply resented Nanak's refusal to accept his invitation. He considered it a personal insult, but he did not persecute the Guru. He quietly bore the humiliation and proceeded no further. The reason was that nobody objected to his reform scheme for the removal in a peaceful manner of what was harmful to society. Kabir had already denounced it in equally strong terms. The German traveller, Baron Hugel, writing three hundred years later, says that the Sikhs worship one God, abhor images, and reject castes, at least in theory.[4] Nanak married a Khatri girl, and chose a Khatri disciple as his successor.

2. The study of the Vedas was permitted to the two upper classes —Brahmans and Kshatriyas according to Alberuni. This privilege was denied to Vaishas and Shudras. Nanak broke this barrier by throwing up Name to all persons irrespective of birth. Nobody protested against it.

3. Similarly, Nanak's denouncement of fasts, penances and pilgrimages implied attacks on perversions, formalism and ritualism, and not

[1] *A Short History of the Sikhs*, 16.
[2] *Evolution of the Khalsa*, I, 113-45.
[3] *Advanced Study in History of the Punjab*, I, pp. 98-103.
[4] *Travels*, 283.

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on their basic conception. He considered these practices of limited utility. He declared that they had not much to do with divine love.

4. Nanak did not deprecate the holy scriptures such as the *Vedas* and the *Quran*. He never questioned the wisdom and philosophy contained in them. He criticised the blind and mechanical readings of these texts without realising God through them. "What availeth thee to read the Vedas and Puranas? It is like loading a donkey with sandal whose perfume he availeth not."[1] Bhai Gurdas declared that the superstitions prevailing at Guru Nanak's time were due to the ignorance of the Vedas by people.[2]

5. Even the sacred thread was not wholly condemned. Nanak denounced the ignorance of the implications of its use, and wearing of it only for the sake of form. One hundred years after Nanak wrote Mohsin Fani: "It is said he (Nanak) held in his hand the rosary of Muslims and wore the sacred thread around his neck."[3] Mohsin Fani further says that a devoted and true disciple of Guru Hargobind named Sadh, perhaps abbreviation of Sadhu Ram, accompanied him from Kabul to Panjab. He had been sent by the Guru to purchase Irani or Iraqi horses. He had the sacred thread on. He tore it off and gave it to the author of the *Dabistan* to tie up his broken coat belt.[4] According to Malcolm, "the family of Govind, proud of their descent, had not laid aside the Zunnar, or holy cord, to which they were, as belonging to Kshatriya race entitled."[5] On one occasion Guru Gobind Singh wanted some thread to fasten his sword belt. Daya Singh, the first member of the newly created Khalsa, a Khatri of Lahore, broke his sacred thread and gave it to the Guru.[6]

6. While challenging the predominant position of Hindu deities, Nanak did not hold them in any disrespect or cast any aspersion on them. He simply wanted to show that they were not superior to God, but were His creation. Mohsin Fani says: "Nanak praised Musalmans as well as the *Avatars* and gods and goddesses of the Hindus; but he held that all these had been created and were not creators, and he denied their incarnation."[7]

7. Nanak's first slogan after enlightenment, "There is no Hindu

[1]Macauliffe. VI, 247.
[2]Bhai Gurdas, *Var, I*, 21.
[3]*The Dabistan*, 223.
[4]ibid, 239.
[5]*Sketch of the Sikhs*, 67-68 fn.
[6]Bhai Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, Rut. III, 28.
[7]*The Dabistan*, 223.

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and no Musalman," might appear revolutionary in its nature. But it was said so innocently that it gave offence to no one, not even to a fanatic Mullan or a bigoted Brahman. His explanation that both had forgotten their original religions, that both being the children of the same God had no difference between them, was satisfying and soothing.

8. People were tired of meaningless ritualism and forcible extortion of money from simple, illiterate people under garb of sacred scriptures. Consequently they welcomed Nanak's plain formula of *Nam Simran* or constant repetition of God's Name, to get deliverance from the ills of this life and salvation hereafter. Nanak's God was the creator of Hindus and Muslims alike. Ram and Rahim, Kartar and Karim were different names of the same God. Nanak held the holy books of Hinduism and Islam in high esteem and regard.

9. Like Hinduism and Buddhism Nanak believed in the law of *Karma* and transmigration of soul. As a matter of fact, the Guru applied the whole weight of his soul force on good living.

10. Nanak pleased only the discontented and the distressed people. His songs and sermons soothed their afflicted minds and restored their confidence in the joy of living. Like his contemporary Martin Luther he preached no new faith. His only contention was that through centuries religion had been polluted and contaminated by numerous superstitions and improper practices. Like a river which is pure at source, but dirty and muddy at mouth, religion must be reformed and its purity restored to meet the needs of the time. Cunningham says: "His reform was in its immediate effect religious and moral only."[1]

11. The Hindu society of Nanak's time was on the whole vegetarian, while the Muslims, one and all, were a nation of meat-eaters. Nanak had no objection to meat diet, but he did not encourage this habit among his disciples. Mohsin Fani writes: "He considered flesh, wine and hog as unlawful (*harām shamurdah*). He gave up meat-eating and enjoined not to injure animals. Meat eating became popular among his disciples after him. Arjan Mal, one of the Guru, on knowing the evil effect of this habit, forbade men from animal diet. He said this practice was against the wishes of Nanak. Eventually Hargobind, son of Arjan Mal, ate meat and took to hunting. Most of his disciples adopted this practice."[2]

[1] *A History of the Sikhs*, 41.
[2] *The Dabistan*, 223.

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12. The institution of the *Sangat* was not new or a revolutionary innovation. It had its forerunner in the Buddhist Sangha and in the congregations of Islam. Similarly the foundation of the office of the Guru which resulted in the gradual building up of the Sikh community was not unknown. Numerous religious *maths* and other bodies have had a succession of Gurus even up to the present day. The four *maths* established by Shankaracharya in the eighth century have been under Gurus up till now.

13. Further, Nanak suggested no change in the civil institutions of Hinduism or Islam. He preached no civil or criminal laws. Cunningham observes: "He left the progress of his people to the operation of time; for his congregation was too limited, and the state of society too artificial, to render it either requisite or possible for him to become a municipal law-giver, to subvert the legislation of Manu, or to change the immemorial usage of tribes or races."[1]

14. The founder of every religion is honoured by his followers only. Nanak is universally loved and revered by people of all religions. You may go to a church, mosque or temple, everywhere they will speak about Nanak with respect. Christ by his bold teachings had annoyed the Jews and the Roman Emperors who hanged him. Muhammad was forced to flee from Mecca to Medina where he was in constant danger to his life. This was the treatment meted out to these great leaders in their own homelands. Nanak on the other hand visited great centres of Hindu and Muslim lore and learning. In those wild days the sword of Muslim fanaticism flashed on the heads of all non-Muslims. Nobody could utter a word against Islam. Nanak pointed out the defects existing in Hinduism and Islam. But such was Nanak's sweetness that nobody felt offended. He acted as a friend of all. He brought peace and happiness to everybody so imperceptibly as dew dropped from heaven unseen.

15. As a child Nanak's genius confounded his teacher by eloquently speaking on the existence of God. As a young boy of nine he delivered a homily to the Brahman priest on the meaning of the sacred thread. As a lad he disappointed his father by neglecting to perform worldly duties assigned to him. As a youth his mind could not be diverted from God towards enjoyment of conjugal pleasures. As a young man he dismayed his employers by absorption in the Name of God. As a fully grown-up man he distressed his sister and brother-in-law by dis-

[1] *A History of the Sikhs*, 41-2.

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appearing from home from time to time. This was indeed revolutionary conduct.

16. In conclusion it might be pointed out that Nanak did not wish to destroy the existing institutions of his time. Like Buddha he wished to live in peace with Hindus and Muslims alike. His chief aim was to condemn the form which had been substituted for the worship of the True Lord. His main concern was not to pull down the old institutions and build up an entirely novel structure on the ruins of the old. He provided his contemporaries with a new viewpoint which could enable them to find the fundamental truth. In its immediate effect, his reform was religious, social and moral and in its intensity, it was moderate, mild, slow and steady, and peaceful and pacifying. To us it appears that Guru Nanak was a reformer of a high order. Sir Lepel Griffin[1] says: "He was a reformer in the best and truest sense of the word."

The office of the Guru perpetuated

Nanak realised that his life's work would come to an end at his death if steps were not taken to provide perpetual and enduring guidance to the simple and illiterate disciples whose number was daily increasing. He had seen how Hindus lay scattered, disunited and corrupted for want of a central authority to bind them together and to preserve the purity of pristine principles of Hinduism. He had also witnessed how the work of other Bhakti leaders was suffering and decaying without such an institution. He had observed at Baghdad that it was the office of the Caliph which was keeping Islam as vigorous and strong as it was in its nascent stage. He was therefore determined to perpetuate the office of the Guru, and was on the look-out to find a suitable person to succeed him. He indirectly and unsuspectingly without giving out his mind to anybody tested the spirit of devotion and sense of discipline, service and self-sacrifice. His disciple, Bhai Lahna, alone, came out successful in every trial and test.

Nanak held a big congregation on Asuj Vadi 5, Samvat 1596[2] (September 2, 1539), 20 days before his death. He delivered a stirring address. He praised Lahna for his single-minded devotion and service. He invited Lahna to come near him, placed five paise and a cocoanut

[1] *Ranjit Singh*, 52.

[2] Sodhi Hazara Singh, *A History and Guide to the Golden Temple of Amritsar*. 7 places it in 1532. Kartar Singh in his *Guru Nanak Dev* says that Guru Angad was nominated Guru on 17 Asarh, 1596 Bikrami (14 June, 1539 AD). (*Guru Nanak Dev*, 127.)

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before him, put his head at Lahna's feet, gave him *Bani Pothi* or a collection of his own hymns and a rosary, called him Angad or a part of his own body, appointed him his successor, and declared that the new Guru shared his spirit and soul as well. By doing so he established the unity of Guruship, based on the principles of impersonality, indivisibility and continuity. In consequence the succeeding Gurus used the name Nanak in their compositions, correspondence, etc. The hymns of each Guru are distinguished by the number of Mahalla. Mahalla one is Guru Nanak and Mahalla two is Guru Angad.[1]

Guru Nanak excluded his sons from succession of Guruship. His younger son Lakhmidas was a worldly man and had no desire for this office. His elder son Srichand was keen on it. But his ideas differed from those of his father. He was deeply disappointed at his elimination. He was a sad man. He renounced the world in mortification. A considerable number of Sikhs followed him, and were called Udasis or the disappointed ones with the world. They believed that the world was illusory, and that the religious leaders should not be family men. Nanak was a householder and so was Angad. Nanak excluded renunciation from Sikhism and made it a religion of householders. Further, Guruship in Sikhism provided a living ideal for its followers. The life of a Sikh centred round the personality of the Guru, whom he adored and emulated and with whom he lived in close personal spiritual union.

His death

Guru Nanak passed away on September 22, 1539, at Kartarpur. Such was the love of both communities for him that he was called: *Nanak Shah Faqir, Hindu ka Guru, Musalman ka Pir.* A *Samadh* or tomb was built at the site of his cremation on the bank of river Ravi. Annual fairs were held at this place and great ceremonies were performed in

[1]Mohsin Fani writes: "The Sikhs believe that when Guru Nanak expired his body was absorbed into the person of Angad, who was his devoted disciple. Thus Guru Angad himself became Nanak. After that Guru Angad's spirit at his death descended into the body of Amar Das in the same manner as mentioned above. In the same way the spirit of Guru Amar Das passed into the body of Ram Das and that of Guru Ram Das into Arjan Mal. Each was given the name of Mahal, first Mahal being Nanak, second Angad till Arjan the fifth Mahal. They say whoever does not recognise Guru Arjan as Baba Nanak his real self is a manmukh or kafir." *The Dabistan*, 225. Guru Hargobind in his letters to Mohsin Fani signed his name as Nanak and not his real name ibid, 237.

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his memory. Later on the tomb was washed away by the floods in the Ravi, and the village went to Pakistan in 1947.[1]

Conclusion

Nanak separated religion from ritualism and politics. He determined the place of religion in social context. His aim was to create a homogeneous society free from class conflict. The worship of God and repetition of Name, he thought, would eradicate all differences between man and man. His emphasis was on adoration of God and devotion to Guru.

Economically, Nanak was not against riches. Wealth should be distributed and not accumulated. *Kirt karo, Nām Japo, wand chhako,* should be the ideal.

Politically he pointed out what kind of rulers the country should have. They should be honest, liberal-minded, just and sympathetic.

The country's foundation rested on the poor and not on the rich. The former were many, very many, and the latter were few, very few. Thus he favoured the rule of the masses. The community meals and community living set an example. He wanted to make the life of the common people easy and happy.

Human life was governed jointly by saint and satan present all the time in a person. Listen to the voice of the saint, and avoid the temptations offered by the satan. He laid emphasis on gurmukh.

Nanak believed in universal good, *Sarbat da bhala* through full development of the individual in body and soul. Bod implied robust health. Mind signified wisdom through holy sangat. Soul denoted meditation and communion with God.

Nanak's religion consisted in the love of God, love of man and love of godly living. His religion was above the limits of caste, creed and country. He gave his love to all, Hindus, Muslims, Indians and foreigners alike.

His religion was a people's movement based on modern conception of secularism and socialism, a common brotherhood of all human beings. Like Rousseau, Nanak felt 250 years earlier that it was the common people who made up the human race. They had always toiled and tussled for princes, priests and politicians. What did not concern the common people, was hardly worth considering.

Nanak's faith was simple and sublime. It was the life lived. His

[1]Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab*, 246.

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religion was not a system of philosophy like Hinduism. It was a discipline, a way of life, a force, which connected one Sikh with another as well as with the Guru. Nanak portrayed his ideas in simple and crisp poetry abounding in subtle wit and wisdom,

Nanak's work to begin with assumed the form of an agrarian movement. His teachings were purely in Panjabi language mostly spoken by cultivators. They appealed to the down-trodden and oppressed peasants and petty traders as they were ground down between the two millstones of government's tyranny and the new Muslims brutality.

Did Guru Nanak found a new religion ?

1. The philosophy of Guru Nanak is not new. It is generally borrowed from ancient Hindu scriptures. He gave it a new turn and fresh meaning according to his own ideas of communion with God.

2. Hinduism believed both in monotheism and polytheism. Nanak retained the former and rejected the latter. He held that God was immortal and He could not be incarnated into mortal human beings like Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Rama and Krishna.

3. The idea of guruship was well-established in Hinduism, but its transformation into living faith had not been so strong and intimate as was insisted upon by Nanak.

4. Nomination of a successor to a departing Guru was not unknown in Hinduism. Nanak added a new and revolutionary feature by declaring that his own soul joined the soul of his successor. Thereby the new Guru commanded the same respect and reverence of his followers as the founder of the movement. All the succeeding Gurus became the embodiment of the founder, and they assumed his name. For distinction they called themselves Nanak II, III and so on. This step definitely gave greater solidarity than it was prevalent in Hinduism. A Hindu religious institution disintegrated after the death of its founder. Sikhism survived with vitality.

5. Religious worship in Hinduism consisted in visiting a temple in the morning and evening, in witnessing the *Ārti* and in listening to *Kathā*, or sermons from sacred scriptures. In Sikhism it was to sing Guru's hymns in praise of God.

6. Hinduism is based on individualism. Congregations are held, but there is little love and affection binding them. Nanak planned to give his followers a close bond of unity and cohesion through *sangats*,

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pangats and personal attachment to the Guru. This unity has come down to our own times as it had existed in its earliest days.

Guru Nanak's aim appears to be to lay the foundation of a reform movement which should serve as a bridgehead between Hinduism and Islam.

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CHAPTER 6

Guru Nanak's Famous Compositions

The Japji

It is believed that *Japji* was composed by Guru Nanak about 1520 at Baghdad, and it was reduced to writing at Kartarpur on the Ravi. It consists of two shalokas, one in the beginning, the other at the end and 38 *pauris* or stanzas. Its first 14 lines are called *Mūl Mantra*. The whole poem discusses communion with God through Karma and Bhakti, action and devotion. It is in Panjabi language and now in Gurmukhi script. There are some Persian and Arabic words in Japji.

Guru Nanak explains the prevailing religious usages and practices. He does not believe in Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He says that the three different functions of creation, protection and dissolution represent only one Supreme Being. Nanak describes numerous gods and goddesses, and holds they are all God's creation. He does not believe in the theory of evolution. God uttered one word, and the whole universe came into being at once. Everything in this world happens under His *hukam*. Nothing is beyond His *hukam*. God grants His grace to those who sincerely repeat His Name. God is formless. He is spirit. His image cannot be conceived. Nanak denounces *Naths* and *Yogis*, and their way of living.

In 21st stanza Nanak says alms-giving, austerities, pilgrimages and religious gifts have little merit.

In 26th stanza he explains that numerous gods, goddesses, *avatars* and holy books have described God in His different aspects, but none has given an adequate description of Him. In stanza 27 Nanak says that God alone is the object of prayer and worship.

In the 28th stanza the Guru declares:

"He who conquers his desires conquers the universe." In the 30th stanza he states: "God sees all, Himself is unseen."

In stanzas 34-37, Guru Nanak lays down five stages of spiritual progress:

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(i) In Dharma Khand the devotee realizes that God is the creator of all things. (ii) In Gian Khand he gains wider knowledge of universe. He feels certain that God is creator, preserver and destroyer. (iii) Sharam Khand is the realm of action and effort. (iv) Karam Khand lays emphasis on good deeds. Up to the fourth stage, the devotee retains his individuality. (v) Sach Khand is the realm of truth. The devotee attains union with God. Atma merges into Parmatma, and loses its individuality.

Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha are the four main interests of human beings. Dharma and Moksha are the two banks of the river of life. They contain the flood of Artha and Kama.

In stanza 38 the Guru says in order to attain union with God, a person should follow eight stages like the minting of a gold coin. "Let chastity be the Smithy, patience the Smith, understanding the Anvil, knowledge the Tools, discipline the Bellow, austerity the Fire, devotion the Pot, immortality the Mould. Thus in the mint of Truth, Word—Name is coined. Those who catch His sight and find acceptance, succeed in their toil. They by His grace achieve salvation."[1]

Japji lays great stress on the oneness of God, repetition of the Name, and complete surrender to His will in thought, word and deed. His essence is Truth, Beauty and Love. Prayers and good deeds are essential, but they are not enough. Without Lord's grace they cannot bear fruit.

In the Epilogue of the *Japji* Guru Nanak says: "Those who meditate on the Name wholeheartedly attain the goal of life."

Asa di Var

Asa is a musical measure, and Var is a heroic measure. It is to be recited before dawn. It consists of *pauṛis* and *shalokas*, which may be called stanzas and staves. There are 24 stanzas and 46 staves. Stanzas are sung in chorus and staves singly with or without an instrument. This ode lays emphasis on oneness of God, importance of the repetition of Name, and complete surrender of oneself to God's will.

God lives in nature, but he is above nature. He is one and cannot be divided. He is a combination of the holy trinity of creation, preservation and dissolution. He is both nirgun or absolute and sagun or personal.

Nanak says: "Everybody else is subject to error; only the Guru and

[1]Sangat Singh, *Japji*.

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God are without error." The only way to worship God is to sing His praises, and to meditate on His Name.

The disciple is made to believe that world is a reality and not a dream. To meditate on the Name will guide him along the right path. When the devotee is saturated with the Name, the Guru would begin to mould his life in a godly way. He is required to shun any feeling of pride, and to live in truth, love and beauty. Sweetness, love and humility constitute truth and beauty. God is not pleased with rites and ceremonies. He needs faith alone.

The substance of 24 *pauṛis* or stanzas is given below:

1. God is self-existent and self-luminous. He first originated Himself, and then created Nature. He knows all and understands everything. He looks on with kindness.

2. He has a Dharma Raja to keep record of everybody's actions The virtuous are treated kindly and are retained in heaven. The sinners are conveyed to transmigration cell for punishment.

3. The souls of sinners at death are fettered and produced before Dharma Raja. A record of their deeds is shown to them. Severe punishment is inflicted upon them. They have wasted their lives.

4. The True Guru is obtained through God's grace. He creates love of the Lord in our minds. The Guru saves his disciples from the chain of births and deaths.

5. The Guru instructs his disciples to repeat the Name, to share their meals with others. They should practise charity without disclosing it to others. They should be humble. The period of youth does not last for ever. It leads to old age and then to death.

6. True Guru alone enables one to realize God. God manifests Himself in True Guru, and speaks through him. Man is freed for ever when he meets the True Guru.

7. The faithful disciples of True Guru worship God patiently and with contentment. They shun evil. They eat and drink moderately. Their meals are simple. They do not care for the world. God bestows greatness on such persons.

8. God alone is the bestower of Truth. Truth is obtained through the Guru. The foolish persons waste away their human life in vain.

9. God's devotees obtain real joy. God's beauty is reflected in them. Love and humility are the essential qualities of Divine worship.

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10. We should seek the holy dust of the sacred feet of the devotees. If luck favours us to get it, we should apply it to our forehead. We obtain fruit according to our actions.

11. A true devotee worships God as his only Beloved. In reality we act as God directs us. It is God who unites us with Him.

12. God's justice is impartial for all, rich or poor, high or low. Everyone is judged in accordance with his deeds. Only the wayward will be punished.

13. We remember God only through Guru's grace. He opens our spiritual eyes, and then we see the world in a different colour. The True Guru is the boat, graciously to ferry us across the ocean of the world.

14. We reap fruit sweet or bitter for our actions. For bad deeds we will be dragged to hell for punishment. Then we will weep over our past misdeeds.

15. God through His kindness draws some people to His service. They reach their goal if they carry out His will. They get the fruit of their soul's desires.

16. God has His eyes on all of us. Some are blessed with the gift of Name. He gives work to all and everybody acts according to His pleasure. In His wrath even kings are reduced to beggary.

17. Worldly men enjoy life to the full. They live in splendid mansions, work in magnificent buildings, ride on finest horses, possess bewitching harems. In the midst of these pleasures they forget the Lord, and even death.

18. The True Guru alone possesses all the virtues. If we are united with the Guru, we will be united with God. Guru through his kindness will enshrine God in our hearts. Thereby we will obtain nine treasures of excellence.

19. Human life is transitory. After a while, we will depart. Why should we then act in pride? The Guru says we should not call anyone bad or low.

20. God is source of all creation. He looks at all of us at work. We should not forsake the Lord who is the master of our life and soul.

21. We must always remember God who alone can give us happiness. His service alone is beneficial. We should act in such a way that we don't lose the Lord.

22. A true servant works according to his master's will. Then he will be respected. His wages will be doubled. If he claims equality

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with his master, he will arouse his indignation and will get shoe-beating in the face. We should be grateful to the Lord whose bread we eat.

23. God creates and He destroys. Some labour hard in bonds. While others ride on fine horses. We must submit to the Lord. He causes things to be done. He will take care of us.

24. God is the creator. He ministers to the needs of His creatures. God has assigned our work to us. Nobody can go outside it. We must submit to His will and willingly should carry out his wishes.[1]

Bara Maha

Bara Maha is said to be the last composition of Guru Nanak composed at Kartarpur on the Ravi towards the close of his life. It is a poem of love. The topic is God realization. Guru Nanak considers himself as a bride and God the bridegroom. It embodies the deepest passion for the divine. The twelve months indicate the changes in Nature and the changes in the moods of the divine lover. The Guru describes the various changes through which a bride passes before the union takes place.

The poem contains 17 stanzas. The first four stanzas have no reference to months. The Guru says that human life is governed by one's good or bad deeds. Happiness and grief depend upon them. The law of Karma operates according to the law of justice. But God can modify it through His grace and mercy. Absorb yourself in the love of the Lord. Live in the Name. The next twelve stanzas give the message of each month. The last stanza relates the joy in union.

Bara Maha is an allegorical poem. The twelve months refer to the Hindi months of the Bikrami year. It begins with the first month of Chait and ends with the last month of Phagun.

Chait (*March-April*): It is the spring season. All is green. Flowers are blooming everywhere. Cuckoo sings on the mango trees. The black bee flits from flower to flower. The bride is separated from her spouse. She pines to meet him. Her loneliness is painful. The bride suffers from pangs of separation. This is the beginning towards God realization.

Baisakh (*April-May*): Trees are covered with green leaves. The bride stands at the door of her house waiting restlessly for her husband. O Lord, have mercy upon me. Come into my home. With-

[1]Chellaram, *Asa di Var*; Teja Singh. *Asa di Var*.

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out you I am useless. With Name in her heart and on her tongue she looks charming and happy.

Jeth (*May-June*): The earth is burning. Water is scarce. Moisture dries up. Bride suffers from loneliness. She wishes to meet her Lord. If her mind is pure and heart is full of real love, true devotion and virtue, He will certainly bless her with His grace.

Asaṛh (*June-July*): Earth and sky are hot. All creatures feel miserable. Crickets chirp in the evening in woods. Everybody looks for a shady place. If truth and virtue abide in the bride's mind and he possesses a loving heart, the Lord will be with her in life and death.

Sawan (*July-August*): Dark clouds appear in the sky. It rains in torrents. Bursts of thunder and flashes of lightning frighten the bride. My spouse has gone abroad. I feel lonely in bed. I am in agony. I cannot bear pangs of separation. O Mother, how can I have appetite and sleep without the Lord? I do not like my fine clothes. She will be happy when her Lord comes and she merges in Him.

Bhadon (*August-September*): There is water everywhere. Pools and ponds are full. It is a dark night and rain has been falling incessantly. Frogs are croaking. Peacocks dance and scream. Mosquitoes are stinging. Snakes are hissing. How can I have peace without the Lord? She will meet Him if she follows Guru's advice. Then the Lord will come to live with her.

Asu, Asvin or Asauj (*September-October*): Summer is departing. Winter is approaching. Trees are green and bushes are in flower. But I am restless. I am growing old, My black hair is growing grey. My Lord does not care for me, because I did not love Him. I loved worldly things. Can I win His love? If you change your way of living under the guidance of True Guru, you will be united with the Lord.

Katak or Kartik (*October-November*): Love is the source of happiness. Love depends upon right knowledge and right actions. This makes life harmonious. The lamp of life must be kept burning with the oil of love. Discard ego. Get the grace of True Guru. O Lord, open the door and let me in. A moment of separation is equal to six months to me. Have mercy upon me.

Maghar or Mangsar (*November-December*): I am grieved that I did not love the Lord. I did not have a pure heart. I must cherish genuine love for Him. I must meditate upon His Name. He is the only True helper. I must offer Him my sincerest devotions.

Poh or Posh (*December-January*): It is winter. Snow is falling. Trees have shed their leaves. The bride has followed the path shown

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by the Guru. She is absorbed in the Lord. O Lord, bless me with Thy vision and liberate my soul from bondage. Let me unite with Thee.

Magh (*January-February*): Her mind is purified. Her heart has become a place of pilgrimage. Meeting with the Lord is like bathing in the Ganga, the Yamuna, and at their confluence with Sarasvati, nay in seven seas. In the month of Magh worship of the Lord is blissful, like bathing in sixty-eight sacred places of pilgrimage.

Phagun or Phalgun (*February-March*): The bride has obtained union with the Lord. The Lord is living in her house. She has attained complete joy and happiness. The bride thanks the Guru for bestowing his grace upon her, and guiding her to unite with the Lord.[1]

Other works

Among Nanak's other works is *Sidh Gosht*. It contains discussions held by Guru Nanak with Nāth yogis living in mountains. They are given in question-answer form. *Majh ki Var*, *Malhar ki Var* and *Dakhni Omkar* are also his compositions. Nanak composed his poetry in many dialects and languages, such as Hindi, Multani, Panjabi, Pothohari and Purabi.

There are numerous Persian and Arabic words in Nanak's compositions. For example :

1. *Asa di Var* contains :
 Pak (pure), *Qādir* (God) and *Qudrat* (Nature).
2. *Dakhni Omkar* has :
 Bina (one who can see) and *Dana* (wise).
3. *Japji* includes :

Bakhshish (gift), *Bātil* (false, absurd), *Bīnā* (who can see with eyes), *Dāna* (wise), *Dar* (gate, entrance), *Dargāh* (court), *Darya* (river), *Gubar* (darkness), *Hukam* (command), *Husan* (beauty, elegance), *Jaur* (force), *Kalām* (the word of God, book of revelation), *Pairhan* (clothes), *Salāh* (consultation), *Shumar* (calculation), *Sift* (qualification).

4. In *Patti Rag Asa* the following words occur :
 Alam (world), *Shāir* (poet), *Sultan* (king).[2]

Nanak composed a quatrain in Persian :

Yak 'arj guftam pesh-e-to,
Dar gosh kun Kartar;

[1] Harbans Singh Doabia, *Bara Ma'ur*; Narain Singh, *Nanak Reinterpreted*, 414-18.

[2] *Adi Granth*, 432.

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Haq kabir, karim to,
Be aib Parwardgär.[1]

[I am making one supplication to Thee, Almighty!, listen to it carefully. O Lord! you are Truth, High, Benevolent and Sinless.]

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[1] *Adi Granth*, 721.

CHAPTER 7

Development of Sikhism under II, III and IV Gurus, 1539-1581

The two most devoted and devout disciples of Guru Nanak were Bhai Lahna and Baba Budha. In their dedication to the Guru and his cause both were equal and alike. For his successor as Guru, Nanak chose Bhai Lahna, a Khatri. Budha was a Jat. Neither of them was a candidate. Perhaps they did not know that Guru wanted to appoint his successor. The Guru's selection might be due to the fact that Bhai Lahna possessed greater intelligence being a business man. Budha was a cowboy and agriculturist. The caste consideration also might have weighed in Lahna's favour, as it was not easy totally to discard impressions of an institution three or four thousand years old. Besides Lahna was older than Budha by two years and a half. Later experience showed that *masands* most of whom were Jats were not good preachers and religionists.

Sir George Campbell who served in the Panjab as a civilian officer during the early days of British rule for many years calls Khatris "very superior people." The Muslim chiefs in Central Asian countries and even in Panjab itself always preferred Khatris to be in charge of their finances, and household affairs. We, therefore, implicitly submit to Guru Nanak's choice.

Guru Nanak gave the people of the Panjab an ideal which was ultimately to mould his followers into a powerful community. It naturally required time for constant schooling under regular guidance. A short while before his death, in 1539[1] AD, he had nominated his most devoted and sincerest disciple, Bhai Lahna, a *Trehan Khatri*, his successor. To him Guru Nanak said: "Between thee and me there is now no difference. None of my Sikhs hath such faith and confidence in me as thou, and therefore I love thee most of all. Thou art verily

[1]Bhai Gurdas, *Var I*, 38, 45; Macauliffe. I, lxxix.

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Angad a part of my body. I congratulate thee."[1] Nanak gave Lahna this name perhaps from the fact that Angad was a trusted follower of Rama, the hero of *Ramayana*, and who had been sent by Rama as his special ambassador to Ravan. Nanak declared that at his death his soul would migrate into the body of Lahna. The appointment of Angad was a step of far-reaching significance. Nanak had rejected the claims of his eldest son Sri Chand because he came out inferior to Lahna in his devotion to the Guru and also he had ascetic tendency. The younger son, Lakhmidas, was not interested in matters spiritual. As Sri Chand was religious-minded, many Sikhs became his followers. They were called Udasis, or the disappointed ones with the world.

Guru Angad, 1539-1552

Guru Angad was born at Matte di Sarāe in Firozpur district on March 31, 1504. On his way to pilgrimage, Lahna heard of Guru Nanak. He came to Kartarpur to pay a casual visit and was caught for good. After the hardest trials spread over more than a decade, Nanak nominated him his successor. He served as Guru from 1539 to 1552. He shifted from Kartarpur to Khadur in Amritsar district situated 5 kilometres from the Beas river in order to avoid the impending conflict with Guru Nanak's sons. During the first six months he remained hidden in the house of a devotee near Khadur. Then at the request of Bhai Budha he assumed the responsibilities of the office[2] of the Guru. His work is briefly given as follows.

Gurmukhi and collection of Guru Nanak's hymns

First of all he turned his attention to the collection of Guru Nanak's hymns which were either written in Lande Mahajni or committed to memory by some of Nanak's disciples, particularly by "the Guru's ancient companion Bala Sandhu, as well as some devotional observations of his own."[3] Guru Angad being the son of a village shopkeeper knew Lande Mahajni script. It is rather rough and crude and cannot easily and properly be deciphered. In it vowel sounds are omitted. For example somebody wrote: "Lalaji Ajmer gae hain!" (Lalaji has gone to Ajmer). It was read as: "Lalaji aj mar gae hain." (Lalaji has died today.) There was a danger that Guru Nanak's hymns written in Lande Mahajni might be misread and misinterpreted. Guru Angad beauti-

[1]Macauliffe, II, 9.
[2]ibid, 13-14.
[3]Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, 44.

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fied the Lande alphabets by giving them better shape, like the alphabets of Dev Nagari script which was used for Sanskrit. He also modified the order of Lande alphabets. The new script came to be called Gurmukhi, meaning that it came from the mouth of the Guru. It was in this script that Guru Angad wrote the hymns of Guru Nanak, gave lessons himself to village children, and penned down his own compositions.

According to *Mahmān Prakāsh* the Gurmukhi script was invented by Angad at the suggestion of Guru Nanak during the founder's lifetime.

The hymns of the first three Gurus were arranged by Guru Amar Das's grandson, Sahansar Ram in two volumes, and on p. 216 of the second volume a note in the margin stated:

"Guru Angad fashioned the Gurmukhi letters and presented in them the hymns."[1]

The exclusive use of Panjabi language and Gurmukhi script and total rejection of Sanskrit led to two results:

(i) The upper class Hindus, Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaishas were steeped in Vedic and puranic ideas expressed in Sanskrit. These classes did not feel attracted towards Sikhism. Though the Gurus were Kshatriyas, yet the people of this class and caste did not favour the Sikh religion.

(ii) Sikhism did not draw followers outside Panjab as Panjabi language and Gurmukhi script were not understood by the people.

Langar

Following the example of Guru Nanak, the *Langar* was continued. It was looked after by his wife, Mata Khivi, and its expenses were met out of the offerings made by his Sikhs and other visitors. Guru Angad did not live on the offerings of the Sikhs. He earned his living by twisting coarse grass (*munj*) into strings used for making a cot.[2]

Missionaries

Guru Angad had a number of missionaries who went about preaching Sikhism in the neighbourhood. One of them Paro Julka was so enthusiastic that the Guru called him Param Hans Sikh. The others were Jagga, Mahiya and Narain Das.[3]

[1]Teja Singh, 'The Editing of the Holy Granth by Guru Arjan,' *The Sikh Review*, June, 1978, pp. 16-19.

[2]Trilochan Singh, *The Sikh Review*, August, 1976, p. 18.

[3]Latif, *History of the Panjab*, 250.

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No ascetics

Guru Nanak's son, Sri Chand, had renounced the world and his disciples practised celibacy and asceticism. They professed to belong to Sikhism, but Guru Angad emphatically declared that there was no place for the passive recluses in Nanak's teachings as his religion concerned the active householders. He asserted that the followers of Sri Chand had no connection whatsoever with Sikhism. Thus he preserved the purity and originality of Sikh religion.

His hymns

Guru Angad composed several hymns. In one of them he says that when a man has only one friend, why should he forget him ? "Different people have different friends; I, unhonoured, have only Thee. O God ! Why do I not die of weeping when I bear Thee not in mind."[1]

Humayun with Guru Angad

The Sikh tradition says that while fleeing to Iran, Humayun waited upon Guru Angad at Khadur and asked him to bless him with sovereignty. Guru Angad remembered the hymn of Guru Nanak which said : "They shall come in seventy-eight (1521AD), depart in ninety-seven (1540AD), and then shall rise another disciple of a hero."[2] The Guru's silence enraged the Emperor who drew out his sword at the Guru. Angad remarked that this sword should have been better used against his rival Sher Shah Suri rather than against the innocent man of God who could not be forced to grant a boon. Bhai Kahan Singh says that Humayun's temper cooled down. He expressed regret and the Guru blessed him.[3] The Guru might have resented Humayun's attitude towards him, but he bore no ill-will against the Emperor. The Guru was an embodiment of forgiveness. He attached no importance to this incident, and ignored it altogether. Guru Angad passed away on March 29, 1552, at the age of 48.

GURU AMAR DAS, 1552-1574

Guru Angad nominated his 73-year-old devout disciple, Amar Das,

[1]Macauliffe, II, 51.
[2]ibid, 19-20.
[3]*Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature*, 834; Kanhiya Lal, *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, 15; Sodhi Hazara Singh, *A History and Guide to the Golden Temple Amritsar*, 10.

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born on 5th May, 1479, in a Bhalla Khatri family at village Basarke about 13 kms south-west of Amritsar. His father was Tej Bhan, a local petty trader. They were all staunch Sanatanists, and vegetarian. Amar Das had a wife, two sons and two daughters. He often went to Hardwar and Jawalamukhi on a pilgrimage, and strictly observed all the religious rites and ceremonies. On these occasions he served *sādhus* and hermits.

Amar Das had crossed sixty years of age. A *sādhu* enquired who his guru was. Amar Das replied he had adopted no guru. The *sādhu* expressed surprise, and suggested he must have one as early as possible. This remark set Amar Das thinking. Near his house there lived his brother Manak Chand. His son was married to Bibi Amro, daughter of Guru Angad. While churning curd every morning before dawn she used to sing Guru Nanak's hymns. Amar Das must have heard her singing many times before. Now he was in a receptive mood. He enquired whose hymns she was singing, and immediately made up his mind to call on Guru Angad. It was in 1541, when Amar Das was 62 years old.

A disciple

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On meeting Guru Angad, Amar Das realised he had found his moorings. Khadur captured his mind and grabbed his soul. He was 62 and Angad was 37. Discarding any prestige of relationship and age, Amar Das became a slave to the lotus-feet of Guru Angad. Home, family and business were all forgotten. He took to the hard life of physical and spiritual discipline (*sādhanā*). Guru Angad used to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning, and after bathing sat for meditation. River water was preferred by holy men for bathing if easily procurable. River Beas flowed 5 kms away from Khadur. To begin with Amar Das undertook the duty of bringing a brass pitcher (*gāgar*) of river water for Guru's bath. In his sixties, it must have taken Amar Das about three hours depending upon moonlit and moonless nights and weather. Once in the dark he struck against a weaver's peg fixed in the ground for weaving cloth (*tānā bānā*), and hurt himself. At the *thud* weaver's wife was awakened. She remarked it was poor Amru and no thief.

He listened to Guru's sermons and fully participated in singing hymns and organising *kīrtans*. He worked in the *langar*. He helped in the preparation of meals, in cleansing cooking utensils and in serving the *sangat*. Through selfless and devoted service Amar Das eliminat-

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ed his ego. He raised himself above praise or criticism. He developed the spirit of patience, forbearance, humility and charity. After eleven year's most devoted service of the Guru and the *sangats*, Amar Das was nominated the third guru.

The Guru

Amar Das held this office from 1552 to 1574. Guru Amar Das moved to Goindwal situated not far away from Khadur on the bank of river Beas on the highroad to Lahore, about 8 kilometres from Kapurthala and 45 kms. from Amritsar. He did so to avoid the impending conflict with Guru Angad's sons who had not approved of their supersession. Even at Goindwal he was harassed by one of the sons named Datu. He went to Goindwal and said: "Only yesterday thou wert a water-carrier in our house, and today thou sittest as a Guru." Saying this he kicked the Guru off his seat. The Guru humbly said: "O great king, pardon me. Thou must have hurt thy foot." The Guru retired from Goindwal and hid himself in a house at Basarke, his home village. Datu set himself up as the Guru. Amar Das was persuaded by Bhai Budha to return, and Datu, finding no following, went back to Khadur.[1] A short account of the work done by him is given below:

Physical fitness

Amar Das laid great emphasis on physical fitness of his disciples He declared that human beings were created in the image of God The human body was the temple of God. It was the duty of his Sikhs to keep the body quite fit to the last. It was a valuable gift of God, and must not be spoilt by bad habits. He sanctified human life by condemning torturing of the body by *yogis* and *sadhus*. He denounced use of intoxicants.[2]

Langar

Guru Amar Das immediately turned his attention to develop the spirit of close unity and brotherhood among his Sikhs. He tried to eliminate caste distinctions in the sangats. While speaking against caste system, the Guru said: "This body is composed of five elements. It is subject to hunger, thirst, joy, sorrow, birth and death. It perisheth,

[1]Macauliffe, II, 64-66.

[2]Bilawal, M III, Ishar Singh, *The Spokesman Weekly*, Guru Amar Das Supplement, 1979, 14.

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and no caste goeth with the soul to the next world. They who are honoured and exalted in God's court are those whose minds are humble, who have renounced falsehood, fraud, slander, deceit, hypocrisy and ingratitude, and who have repeated the Name and benefited others. If the high caste on which people plume themselves in this life be not recognised in the next, of what advantage is it ? The Guru recogniseth no caste."[1] Guru Amar Das obliged all visitors and his Sikhs to partake of food in his *langar* or community mess before seeing him, thus regularising the system of interdining. *Pahle pangat pichhe sangat* was the slogan.[2]

The Guru's *langar* was becoming a well-established institution. All the offerings of the day were spent on the *langar*. The visitors and *sangat* were given good food consisting of wheat bread rubbed with ghi, fried pulse with onion and rice-milk (*khīr*). The Guru was usually present in the *langar* at noon to look after the *pangat*. The Guru did not eat in the *langar*. He earned his livelihood by organising sale of salt and oil in the local market. When asked why he did not take meals in the *langar*, he replied that it gave him greater happiness to see his Sikhs eating in the *langar* by providing provisions and labour themselves. The Guru's own meals were simpler and cheaper. While in the *langar* the Guru enquired about the welfare of every Sikh's family members, and offered solution of their problems. Such an affectionate bond between the Guru and his disciples made the Sikh movement popular and powerful.

Bibi Bhani's marriage, 1553

The Guru had two sons Mohan and Mohri and two daughters, Dani and Bhani. Bhani was unmarried. Guru's wife was insisting for her marriage. One day the Guru enquired what kind of a boy she desired for the girl. Ram Das popularly called Jetha or the eldest child who had been in contact with Amar Das since 1546 and had been serving the Sikh *sangats* zealously was standing nearby. The lady pointed towards him, saying such a boy would be quite suitable. The Guru remarked that she had already found the groom, there was no need to search anywhere else.

The marriage took place in the beginning of 1553. Jetha expressed his happiness thus:

[1]Macauliffe, II, 84-85.
[2]*Suraj Prakash*, I, 30.

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"The Lord has accomplished the work. He has come to wed a holy bride."

Tour of holy places

In 1553 on the day of sun eclipse huge crowds of pilgrims from all over India visited Kurukshetra and Hardwar for a holy bath. The Sikh *sangat* expressed a wish to see these sacred places. The Guru readily agreed to take them there. He had two objects in view. Firstly, to show them the zeal and devotion of pilgrims. Secondly, to preach and make the new faith known to the people belonging to different parts of the country. This programme was successfully executed. It produced one good result. The Guru and his disciples felt the need of such gatherings of the total population of the Sikhs at the Guru's headquarters. River Beas was to provide a holy dip.

Two Sikh fairs

The idea seized the mind of Guru Amar Das. He became anxious to meet the whole families of his Sikhs, and establish close personal bond with men, women and children He chose two great festivals which took place at an interval of about six months. Baisakhi fair was held in March-April, and Diwali in October-November. The first general gathering met on Baisakhi day in 1554. The occasion was most welcome by women and children. For the first time women in hundreds moved about freely with uncovered faces and ate in the Guru's *langar*. The next gathering on the Diwali day was much greater.

The manjis

The organisation of two fairs led to another development of still greater importance. The *sangats* of distant places desired that they should be locally united to hold *kirtans*. The previous Gurus moved about preaching and meeting their disciples. Guru Amar Das being old and due to the increasing number of visitors at Goindwal did not like to travel much. As a visitor to Hardwar, Amar Das knew that the *Pandās* (priests) had divided their own areas of operation. A Panda or his representative visited his jajmān (devotee) once a year to collect offerings. Guru Amar Das adopted the same device. He divided the area inhabited by his Sikhs into 22 branches called Manjis

A *Manji* covered a certain specified area. Literally it signified a cot

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covered with a good sheet and placed in a clean room. The Guru or his representative on a visit to that place or a local Sikh preacher would sit on it. The congregation sat on ground. They met on definite days and special occasions. The place was in charge of a devout disciple who collected offerings for the *langar* as well as for the Guru's *Bhent* fund. He or she was designated Sangatia. A *Manji* was located at a central place The Sikhs living in neighbouring villages had a *pīṛhi* or a very small cot fit for sitting of one person only. A local member would sit on it to lead the congregation into singing holy hymns.

Some names of these *manjis* are given in *Mahman Prakash* of Sarup Das Bhalla, Kahan Singh's *Mahan Kosh* and Kanhiya Lal's *Tarikh-e-Panjab*. Their total number is said to be 22 having under them 52 branches or *piṛhis*. We have arranged some of them according to the region.

Majha

1. Manak Chand Jhinwar (water carrier) at Vairowal in Amritsar district.
2. Sada Ram, a blacksmith, at Bakala in Amritsar district.
3. Hindal at Jandiala near Amritsar.
4. Gangu Shah banker at Lahore.
5. Mutho-Murari, a devoted couple, at Chunian in Lahore district.

Jalandhar Doab

1. Paro Julka called Param Hans on account of his sincerity and devotion was given charge of Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur districts.
2. Mahesh Dhir at Sultanpur Lodi.

Kangra Hills

1. Sawan Mal, nephew of Guru Amar Das, at Haripur Guler.
2. Name not given, at Dharamsala.

Kashmir hills

1. Phirya at Mirpur.

Malwa

1. Khera at Firozpur.
2. Māi Das Bairāgi in charge of a part of Malwa region, probably Ludhiana district.

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3. Mai Bhago at village Wayun, tahsil Kharar, district Rupar.
4. Māi Sewān at village Gardnoh in Patiala district.
5. Sachan Shah in charge of Ambala district.

Sind

1. Lalu in charge of some area in Sind.[1]

The appointment of three women preachers was a unique contribution of Guru Amar Das.[2]

Aggression ignored

The increasing number of Sikh visitors to Goindwal created another serious problem. The population of Goindwal consisted of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. The Sikhs were in a small minority. As their number was increasing, the Muslims thought they might lose their superiority over Hindus and Sikhs. The Sikhs used to fetch water from a common well in earthen pitchers. The Muslim urchins would throw stones at them, and would break their vessels.

The Sikhs complained to the Guru against the oppression of local Muslims "blinded by authority and wealth, they deemed everyone inferior to themselves".[3] The Guru advised quiet submission. The situation did not improve. The Sikhs enquired how long they should go on suffering. The Guru replied: "As long as you live. It is not proper for saints to take revenge. Nay, there is no greater penance than patienee, no greater happiness than contentment, no greater evil than greed, no greater virtue than mercy, and no more potent weapon than forgiveness. Whatever man soweth he shall reap. If he sows trouble, trouble shall be his harvest. If a man sows poison, he cannot expect ambrosia."[4] He further said: "If anyone ill-treat you, bear it. If you bear it three times, God Himself will fight for you the fourth time, and extirpate your enemies."[5]

The Baoli

At the same time the Guru decided to give the Sikhs an indepen-

[1]Gobind Singh Mansukhani and J.S. Pall, *The Spokesman Weekly*, Guru Amar Das Supplements, 1979, 6-7. Dr. Fauja Singh in his *Guru Amar Das*,127, has given a complete list of 22 manjis.

[2]Kanhiya Lal, op. cit., 19.

[3]Macauliffe, II, 68.

[4]ibid.

[5]ibid, 70.

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dent well of their own. The digging of the well started in 1556. It was completed in 1559. His idea was to provide a source of pure water to everybody without the use of rope and bucket. The bucket often fell into the water on breaking the rope or on loosening the knot. It was a tough job to recover the bucket. Besides rope and bucket could not be kept on the well all the twenty-four hours. Hence the water was approached by a flight of steps numbering 84.

The Guru declared: "Whoever would attentively and reverently repeat the Japji on every step, would escape from the wanderings in the wombs of the eighty-four lakhs of living creatures." Thus the baoli became a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs. On its completion the Guru gave a feast to all the residents of Goindwal and its neighbourhood along with his Sikh *sangat*.

Akbar pays homage to the Guru

The great Emperor Akbar was a different man from his predecessors. He believed in saints of all religions and paid them homage while touring over his empire. He held in great reverence the Sikh Gurus. The Sikh tradition says that the Emperor visited Guru Amar Das at Goindwal. In accordance with his practice recently established the Emperor was requested to dine in *Guru ka Langar* in *pangat* before seeing the Guru. The Emperor willingly agreed. He sat on the floor and took his meal. The Sikhs, both men and women, working in the community mess so deeply impressed Akbar with their humility, spirit of service, feelings of reverence for the Guru as well as for the Emperor, and devotion to God that he offered a few villages revenue-free for the support of the *langar*. The Guru respectfully declined saying that the *langar* depended solely on the offerings of the Sikhs. Akbar could not go without making a present. On learning that the Guru's son-in-law, Ram Das, was in search of some land in the heart of Majha, the Emperor granted a tract of land not far from Chubhal to Bibi Bhani. The Guru could not refuse a gift to a girl.

Santokh Sihgh writes :

Patta pargane kā likh dīn,
Rahen gram sab Guru adhīn.
Ād Jhabāl bir jeh karyo,
Bohte grām arap mard bharyo.[1]

"It is said," writes Cunningham "that he found an attentive listener

[1]*Gur Pratap Suraj Granth*, Ras II, 10.

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in the tolerant[1] Akbar." There is no doubt that Akbar's visit to Goindwal greatly increased the Guru's prestige and popularity and resulted in adding large numbers of fresh followers to Sikhism.

Similarly the Raja of Haripur Guler in Kangra hills first dined in the *langar* and then saw the Guru. He supplied timber free of cost for Guru's buildings at Goindwal. It came floating down in river Beas.

His philosophy

Guru Amar Das declared that man consisted of body, mind and soul. The body may be compared to a chariot, mind to a charioteer, and soul to the owner of the chariot. The sense-organs were the horses and craving was the road. A man believing in physical pleasures only was manmukh. The Guru could make him realize divinity in him, and would check his ego and guide him to follow the divine path. The man would thus become gurmukh.

Guru Amar Das composed 874 hymns in 14 Ragas.

His hymns are simple and melodious, and the language is plain and easy. For example :

Mittar ghanere kar thaki merā dukh kāte koi,
Mil paritam dukh kate sabad milawa hoi.[2]

[I got tired of making many friends who could remove my woes. My woes ended on meeting the Beloved through assimilation of hymns.]

Mukhoh Har Har sabh ko karāe viriae hirdae vasiā;
Nanak jin ke hirdae vasiā; mokh mukat tin pāiā.[3]

[All repeat the Name of Hari by tongue, but few let Him live in their hearts. Nanak says in whose heart He lives, obtains salvation.]

Lobhi ka waisāh nā kijai jekā pār vasāe,
Ant kāl tithe dhuai jithe hath nā pāe.[4]

[Do not trust a greedy person as far as you can. He will deceive you in the end when he will be beyond your reach.]

Anand

Anand forms a part of Guru Amar Das's compositions. It is

[1]Cunningham, 44.
[2]Rag Siri, *Ādi Granth*, 37.
[3]*Adi Granth*, 565.
[4]Shalok, *Adi Granth*, 1417. Joginder Singh. Gems from Goindwal, *The Spokesman Weekly*, Guru Amar Das Supplement, 1979, 17-18.

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considered as blissful as Guru Nanak's *Japji* and Guru Arjan's *Sukhmani*. It is a devotional composition. It lays emphasis on spiritual regeneration. It is a discourse on God's glory and grandeur. Anand may be divided into three parts :

1. In the first place the Guru points out hurdles lying in the way of a devotee. They are avarice, ego, falsehood, greed, hypocrisy, and worldly desires. The devotee should avoid them as far as possible while performing his duties towards his family, in his professional career, and in the service of society.

2. The devotee should keep constant association with the Guru, the holy *sangat*, and join in the *kīrtan* and recitation of *Gurbāni*.

3. He should surrender himself completely to God's will. Then all grief and sorrows would disappear. The devotee would be blessed with divine wisdom. He would become *jiwan-mukt*, or the liberated one.

Sangat

Guru Amar Das stressed necessity for holy company or *sangat*. In the *sangat* a disciple acquires spiritual discipline or *sādhanā*. He gains moral strength to resist evil and to practise *Nām Simran*. Leading a family life his mind would not be involved in worldly things. The Guru said bliss could be obtained by singing God's praise and glory.

The members of the *sangat* were all considered as brothers and sisters. Feeling of common fellowship were developing in the new community. Everybody felt elated with hope and courage. He considered himself a member of this large family. This gave him strength because he had a large number of persons to share his joys and sorrows.

According to Sarup Das Bhalla's *Mahmān Prakāsh Kavita*, Guru Amar Das and his congregations listened in the afternoon to *katha* from Puranas explained by Pandit Kesho Gopal.[1]

Mohan Pothi

Guru Amar Das instructed his son, Mohan, to collect the hymns of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, together with those of Guru Amar Das himself. They were to be recited correctly at daily *kirtan*. This collection was called Mohan Pothi.

Udasis kept out

Sri Chand and his followers called Udasis considered themselves

[1]Rajinder Singh, ibid, 11-12.

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Nanak's Sikhs. Guru Angad had declared them non-Sikhs. They again tried to join Sikhism. Guru Amar Das emphatically declared that there was no room for Udasis in Sikh religion.[1] This policy preserved unity and prevented disintegration of Sikh religion.

Social reforms

Guru Amar Das made a number of social reforms. He tried to eliminate caste distinctions through his *sangats* and *pangats*. In his congregations women did not observe *purdah*. He prohibited *syapa*, beating of breast by women in the form of a parade on the death of a relative. He insisted on monogamy. He condemned *Sati*. He declared: A true *Sati* is one who bravely bears the shock of separation and lives her normal life with virtue, dignity and discipline. He encouraged widow remarriage.[2]

Gurushíp made hereditary

Guru Amar Das made a departure from the previous practice in appointing his successor. Hitherto the guruship had been on a non-family basis. But the Guru, being highly pleased with the single-minded devotion and service of his daughter Bibi Bhani and son-in-law, Bhai Ram Das, a Sodhi Khatri of Lahore, conferred the guruship on the latter and his descendants, thereby making this office hereditary based on the principle of selection. The claims of his own sons were turned down.

His death

Of all the Sikh Gurus, Amar Das enjoyed the longest span of life. He possessed a sweet and lovable personality. He maintained himself and his family on his own meagre earnings through the local sale of salt and oil by his sons. He kept only one spare dress and ate very simple and plain food consisting of bread and one pulse. The use of vegetables was not common in those days. Only potatoes and onion were available. He might have kept two or more cows to have a regular supply of milk and *lassi*. A cow remained in milk for about 7 or 8 months, and the quantity of milk was small. Buffaloes were generally kept by agriculturists both Hindus and Muslims. In his devotion to God, Guru Nanak and Angad and his Sikhs, Amar Das was as

[1]Asa, Patti III in Teja Singh's *Sikhism*, 69.
[2]Rag Suhi, *Adi Granth*, 787.

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firm as a rock. He departed from this world on September 1, 1574, at the age of 95. His *smadhi* was built at Goindwal on the bank of river Beas, but it was washed away by the river later on.

Guru Ram Das, 1574-1581

Ram Das generally called Jetha or the eldest child was born at Chuna Mandi, Lahore, on September 24, 1534. His father Hari Das, a Sodhi Khatri was a petty trader. Both of his parents died before Ram Das was seven years old. His grandmother took him to her village, Basarke. Ram Das lived there for five years. Amar Das was then living at Khadur in the *sangat* of Guru Angad. This was the talk of the whole village for an old man of 62 had left his home. Ram Das went to Khadur in 1546 and attended Guru Angad's *sangats*. He developed great liking for the Guru and Amar Das. When Guru Amar Das settled at Goindwal in 1552, Ram Das also became a permanent inhabitant of the new township, and spent most of his time in Guru's durbar. In the beginning of 1553 he was married to Bibi Bhani, youngest daughter of Guru Amar Das.

Ram Das became Guru in 1574 at the age of forty, and held the office for seven years only. Mohan, the elder son of Guru Amar Das, deeply resented his father's decision in ignoring his claim. He became so much dejected that he confined himself to his room and completely stopped his public activities. The younger son Mohri and Guru's elder son-in-law, Rama, reconciled themselves. A brief account of his work is given below.

Amritsar

Bhai Jetha was asked by Guru Amar Das to select a place for himself.[1] At a distance of 40 kms from Goindwal he chose a jungle site surrounded by villages of Gilwali, Gumthala, Sultanwind and Tung having a sacred pool of water.

It was a common land or *Shāmlāt Deh*, and seems to have been granted by Emperor Akbar with the consultation of the Chaudharis of these villages who must be following in the train of the Emperor according to an old custom and practice. The digging of the tank was started in 1577. This is considered as the foundation year of Amritsar.

According to the *Gazetteer of Amritsar District* "in 1577[2] he ob-

[1]Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mahman Prakash*, 289.

[2]Sodhi Hazara Singh says that Guru ka Chak was founded in 1573 AD, op. cit. 18.

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tained a grant of the site, together with 500 bighas of land, from the Emperor Akbar on payment of Rs. 700 Akbari to the zamindars of Tung who owned the land."[1]

There he dug a tank to which he gave the name of Amritsar, the tank of nectar 40 kms north-west of Goindwal. This was constructed under the supervision of Bhai Budha. A number of habitations grew around this tank The whole place was popularly called Guru ka Chak or Chak Guru or Chak Ram Das or Ramdaspura. Some petty traders and shopkeepers settled near the tank to meet the requirements of the people, particularly of those who were digging the tank. This shopping centre came to be known as Guru ka Bazar. Guru Ram Das started construction of another tank called Santokhsar.

Visit of Sri Chand

Guru Nanak's elder son, Sri Chand, had renounced the world, and founded the sect of Udasis. He had not called upon Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das. About forty years had passed and his feelings of grievance had been considerably assuaged. He came to see Guru Ram Das. The Guru received him on the outskirts of Goindwal with offerings of sweets and Rs. 500. Sri Chand remarked that the Guru had grown a long beard. Ram Das replied : "Yes, I have grown a long beard that I may wipe thy feet therewith," and he actually proceeded to do so. Sri Chand held back and said: "O great king, thou art senior, thou art in my father's place. It is magic like this which hath made thee a Guru. I possess no such power, and therefore I was superseded. I cannot express thy greatness. The Sikhs who come to behold thee shall be saved."[2] Guru Ram Das was careful to keep the identity of Sikhism intact. He did not allow Udasis to join Sikh religion or his Sikhs to join the Udasis. Yet the Udasis considered themselves a part of Sikh religion. They held the same views as the Sikhs about God, Gurus, and their philosophy.

Fellow-feeling

Guru Ram Das instructed the Sikhs to serve others whenever possible. He said: "I will pull fans and draw water and eat whatever

[1] *Amritsar Gazetteer*, (1883-84) p. 61; George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England*, I, 258 gives 1581 as the date of foundation of Amritsar.

[2] Macauliffe, II, 257-58.

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Thou shalt give me."[1] In *Sarang ki Var* he observed:

"For a religious man it is not unholy to get wealth, provided he spends it in God's way, and gives and lives in comfort".[2] He advised Sikhs to help other Sikhs with money and material. He declared: "When a Sikh has got an important business in hand, join him and pray for him. If you see that it cannot be carried on without funds, collect money for him from every quarter, and at the same time give something yourselves."[3]

The Guru's deep humility and his spirit of service and devotion throughout his life was a great source of inspiration for his followers. He daily attended the *langar*, and there he established perfect unity between himself and his Sikhs. He expressed his delight thus:

As a mother is happy to see her child taking food or as a fish is delighted by remaining in water, so the Guru is filled with joy when he sees his Sikhs eating in the *langar.*

Guru Ram Das declared:

(1) *Har Har kareh nit kapat kamáveh hirdā sudh nā hoe,*
An din karam kae bauh tere supne sukh na hoe.[4]

[The deceiver always repeats the Name of Hari, but his heart is not purified. Let him do so everyday, he will not get peace of mind even in dream.]

(2) *Satgur ki sewā chākri je chaleh Satgur bhāe.*[5]

[You can please the True Guru through service and servitude.]

Nomination of Arjan and domestic feud

Guru Ram Das nominated his youngest son Arjan Mal[6] his successor. Arjan's greatness when a child had been predicted by Guru Amar Das who had observed: "*Yeh mera dohita, Bani ka bohita banega.*" [This grandson of mine shall be the boat to carry Guru's message everywhere.][7] The Guru's eldest son Prithi Mal generally called Prithia was cut up rough. He vehemently protested against his supersession. The second son Mahadev did not press his claim.

[1]Rag Suhi, M IV.
[2]Teja Singh, op. cit., 31-32.
[3]ibid, 32.
[4]Rag Suhi, *Adi Granth*, 732.
[5]Var Sarang, *Adi Granth*, 1246.
[6]The Sikhs call him Arjan Dev. Mohsin Fani calls him Arjan Mal. *The Dabistan*, 233.
[7]Kanhiya Lal, op. cit., 24.

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"Prithia," writes Macauliffe, "whose anger knew no bounds, addressed offensive language to his father, and then informed Bhai Buddha that his father had acted improperly. The Guruship was his own right, yet it had been given to his youngest brother. He vowed that he would remove Guru Arjan, seat himself on the Guru's throne, and the Emperor himself would admit the justice of his claim." Guru Ram Das remonstrated : "Why, O my son, quarrel with thy brother ? It is a sin to quarrel with him who begot thee and reared thee. The wealth of which thou art proud belongeth to no one. In a moment shalt thou abandon the pleasures of sin, and then shalt thou repent. Repeat His name who is thy dear Lord, thy Master, and thy God. The slave Nanak giveth thee instruction; if thou hearken unto it, thy regrets shall depart."[1]

Prithi Mal did not mend his ways. His insulting behaviour towards the Guru and hostility towards Arjan continued unabated. Ram Das's patience gave way and he in utmost grief called him Mina or villain.[2] The grief-stricken Guru breathed his last on September 1, 1581, at the young age of 47. In his memory a *smadhi* was erected at Goindwal on the bank of river Beas.

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Macauliffe's wrong assumption

The institution of *masands* and the title of *sachcha Padishah* are wrongly attributed to Guru Ram Das by Macauliffe. He refers to *Dabistan-e-Mazahib* as his authority. Its Persian text is absolutely clear having no ambiguity on this point. It assigns both these things to Guru Arjan.[3] As a matter of fact there was no need to appoint *masands* by Guru Ram Das, as during his time the number of Sikhs had been dwindling owing to Prithi Mal's opposition. Cunningham says that "the total number of Sikhs in the time of Guru Ram Das appears to be only eighty-four."[4] Perhaps it refers to prominent Sikhs only as stated by Bhai Gurdas in *Var 11*.

[1]Macauliffe, II, 282-83.
[2]ibid, 284.
[3]ibid, 271; *The Dabistan*, 233.
[4]Cunningham, 46, fn.1.

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CHAPTER 8

Guru Arjan, 1581-1606

Guru Arjan, fifth in succession, was the first Guru born as a Sikh. He proved himself an original thinker, illustrious poet, practical philosopher, great organiser, eminent statesman, shining sage, saint and seer, composer of music, scholar, founder of tanks and towns, embodiment of love, humility and service, and the first martyr to faith. He was a dutiful son, conciliatory brother, loving husband, inspiring father, beloved master and devoted servant of God. He possessed a tender heart but resolute will. He was forgiving but fearless, firm in his faith like a rock, but never a fanatic. He completely changed the external aspect of Sikh religion.

Arjan was born at Goindwal on April 15, 1563. His father was Guru Ram Das and mother Bibi Bhani. He was their youngest son. His two elder brothers were Prithi Mal and Maha Dev. He became Guru at the young age of eighteen on September 1, 1581. His lasting contributions are the foundation of Hari Mandar, the *Adi Granth* and his martyrdom.

Masands

Immediately after his succession, Arjan decided to devote himself to the completion of both the tanks, extending the hamlet of Ramdaspura and constructing temples in the tanks. This required money. Adopting the practice of Muslim Zakat, Guru Arjan converted voluntary offerings of the Sikhs into compulsory contributions.[1] Guru Amar Das had appointed a *Sangatia* in every *manji*. Arjan called upon *Sangatias* to collect offerings from the Sikhs at the rate of one-tenth of their income. It was called *Daswandh*. To encourage them to work with greater zeal, the *Sangatias* were upgraded as *Masands*. It was the Panjabi form of the Persian word *Musannad* meaning nobles. They

[1] *The Dabistan*, 233; Macauliffe, *Calcutta Review*, XLIII, 60.

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preached, settled disputes and kept the Sikhs under a regular administrative system. The *masands* were not paid any salary. They retained a portion of the offerings received by them with the approval of the Guru. It generally amounted to one-third. It is certain that *Daswandh* was paid more willingly and without fail than the revenues of the Mughal Government. All the offerings were presented every six months by the *masands* to the Guru on the days of Baisakhi and Diwali. The great majority of *masands* were Jats while a few were Brahmans and Khatris. At the time of departure the Guru bestowed upon *masands* turbans and *chadars* as robes of honour.[1] This proved a great source of income to meet the enormous expenditure of the Guru's building plans and made the Sikhs accustomed to submit to regular discipline.[2] A *manji* was named *Bari Sangat* and a *pirhi* was called *Chhoti Sangat*. The Guru's residence was called *Durbar*.

The Guru's buildings

(i) *Tanks*. The *kacha* sarovar of Amritsar was made *pucca*. It was widened and deepened.

Guru Arjan constructed a number of tanks to serve as places of pilgrimage. Santokhsar at Ramdaspura was finished in 1588. Kanhiya Lal says that the Raja of Mandi, Himachal Pradesh, contributed Rs. 4,000 for its construction.[3]

(ii) *Hari Mandar*. Ist Magh 1645 BS: In 1588 Arjan started construction of Hari Mandar in the centre of Amritsar tank. The foundation stone of the temple was laid on first Magh Samvat 1645 (28 December, 1588), by the famous Muslim Sufi saint of Lahore named Mian Mir. He was thirteen years older than Arjan, and was a great supporter of the Sikh Gurus. It is said that the mason changed the position of stone in order to place bricks on it properly. The saint remarked that the temple would have to be pulled down in due course and would be built anew.[4] Bhai Budha superintended its construction. The Hindu temples and Muslim mosques were built on a raised plinth. Arjan constructed the Hari Mandar on lower plinth than the surrounding area. The idea was that God could be attained by bending low in submission and humility. Another distinguishing feature was

[1] *The Dabistan*, 233; Macauliffe, *Calcutta Review*, XLIII, 60.

[2] Karam Singh, *Katak Ki Baisakh*, 49, 183.

[3] *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, 25.

[4] The prophecy came out true about a century and a half later when Ahmad Shah Abdali blew it off with gunpowder.

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added to this temple. The Hindu temples and Muslim mosques were closed on three sides and had only one doorway facing east in the case of Hindus and looking west in the case of Muslims. Guru Arjan provided four doorways one on each side. The implication was that God lived in every direction, that the temple was open to all the four Hindu castes, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishas and Shudras; to all the four religions in India, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Sikhism, and to all the people of the world from north, south, east and west. The temple stands like a lotus in water. There is no idol, no image and no pictures for worship. It is a temple to sing the glory of God. Hari Mandar became a spiritual and cultural centre of the new community. It became the leadng place of pilgrimage of the Guru's disciples. The Guru established his permanent abode here. The six-monthly gatherings of all the Sikhs were now held at Amritsar. The Guru and his wife Mata Ganga personally looked after the pilgrims.

(iii) *Taran Tāran* : Guru Arjan often went on tours to spread the gospel of Nanak among the Jat peasantry of Majha tract. In 1590 he was struck by an attractive site twenty kilometres south of Amritsar. Here he laid out another big tank which was named Taran Tāran, which means a raft to take men across world's ocean. It became another important place of pilgrimage. It saved Hindus from becoming Musalmans due to the propaganda of Sakhisarwar Muslims whose seat was located at a distance of 12 kms.

(iv) *Kartarpur :* Sixty-six kilometres to the east of Amritsar Guru Arjan dug a tank called Gangasar. The new township was named Kartarpur, the abode of God.

(v) *Baoli :* Arjan built a baoli or an oblong well at the place in Lahore where his father was born.

(vi) *Chheharta* : Sulahi Khan, a Mughal revenue official of Baṭala, led an armed attack on Guru Arjan. The Guru retired to the neighbouring village of Wadali. Finding scarcity of water at the place the Guru dug a well which was worked by six persian wheels. The place came to be called Chheharta. It was here that Hargobind, the next Guru, was born. The Guru expressed his joy in a hymn: "The True Guru hath granted me what my heart desired."[1]

Number of Sikhs increases

These building activities attracted the Majha people who embraced

[1]Macauliffe, III, 34-35.

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Sikhism in large numbers. Mohsin Fani writes: "At every place the Sikhs increased. In the time of Guru Arjan Mal their number became very large. In most of the towns in the country a few Sikhs were definitely found.[1]

Princely style of living

To inspire the minds of his disciples with the grandeur and glory of the new religion, Guru Arjan began to live in an aristocratic style. The Guru rejected the old path of renouncing earthly pleasures. He advocated that spiritual life and worldly living were two aspects of a single reality. The belief that world was *Maya* or deception was given up. The Guru taught that mundane pleasures could be enjoyed within proper limits, and they should not be allowed to interfere with good living. He erected "lofty buildings"[2] at Amritsar, wore rich clothes, kept fine horses procured from Central Asia and some elephants and maintained retainers as bodyguards in attendance. In consequence the Sikhs venerated the Guru to such an extent that they called him "Sachcha Padishah"[3] or the veritable king who led human soul to salvation as opposed to worldly kings who controlled people's mundane deeds. It also implied that the Guru governed by principles of love and justice. The temporal kings, on the other hand, ruled by force of arms and fear of authority. Latif is wrong when he says that Guru Arjan "laid aside the rosary." Rosary was the constant companion of the Guru.

Trade in horses

Guru Arjan appears to have encouraged his followers to take to trade and commerce in addition to agriculture. This made them rich, adventurous, fearless and free from caste prejudices as they had to buy horses from Central and West Asia. He seems to have organised some trade in horses purely for himself to meet his rising personal expenses, as he would not spend money contributed by his disciples on himself. The contemporary author of the *Dabistan* writes: "Some of the Sikh Gurus take to agriculture and others to trade."[4] The Sikhs became good horsemen and formed the nucleus of the Guru's military power.

[1] *The Dabistan*, 225, 233.
[2] ibid, 234.
[3] ibid, 233.
[4] ibid.

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The Sikh community acquired the position of a separate state within the Mughal state, and it prepared the way for their political development.

Emperor Akbar visits Guru Arjan, November, 1598

Akbar's Prime Minister and Court historian, Abul Fazl, writes in *Akbar Namah* that Emperor Akbar crossed river Beas at Goindwal on an elephant while his army passed over by a bridge. The Emperor called at the residence of Guru Arjan on November 24, 1598. Guru Arjan was 35 in the prime of life. His bewitching and handsome appearance, sweet and melodious voice and fascinating and charming manners, his princely style of living, his warm reception of the Emperor and his singing of the hymns deeply impressed Akbar. Sujan Rae Bhandari gives greater details of this meeting: "When His Majesty left Lahore and reached the neighbourhood of Batala, he came to know that a fight had taken place in the house of Achal between Musalman *faqirs* and a group of Hindu *sanyasis*. The Muslim *faqirs* prevailed and by way of retaliation they demolished the temples of the place. His Majesty King Akbar to do justice against the excesses committed put many of them into prison, and ordered that the demolished temples should be built anew. From there he crossed the river Beas and visited the dwelling place of Guru Arjan, successor of Baba Nanak, who was famous for divine love. The Emperor was highly pleased to meet him and with his recitation of the hymns of Baba Nanak in praise of God. Guru Arjan offered him a suitable present out of regard for his visit. He represented that during the stay of the imperial army in Panjab the price of grain had gone up, and the revenues of parganahs had been increased. Now on the departure of royal troops the price of corn would come down. It would be difficult for the subjects to pay the enhanced revenue. The Emperor acceded to his request and issued orders to his Chief Diwan to reduce the revenue by one-sixth. He instructed that the revenue must be charged according to the concession granted and nothing more should be demanded."[1]

The Emperor's visit considerably raised the prestige of the Guru. The rural traders and peasants of the Majha became Sikhs in large numbers.

[1] *Khulasat-ut-Twarikh*, 425.

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The Adi Granth

The most valuable achievement of Guru Arjan was the compilation of a holy book for the Sikhs known as *Adi Granth* and popularly called *Granth Sahib* or *Guru Granth*. In Sikhism worship consisted of singing the hymns of Gurus. The Guru wished to lay down the exact hymns to be sung and correct rituals to be performed by the Sikhs. This was necessitated by the fact that his elder brother Prithi Mal who had been excluded from guruship was composing his own hymns and was spreading them among the Sikhs as those of Nanak and other Gurus. Guru Arjan also desired to raise the status of Sikhism from a sect to a religion. This object could be attained by providing the Sikhs with holy scriptures of their own like the *Vedas*, the *Bible* and the *Quran*. He, therefore, decided to collect the hymns of all the Gurus including his own in the form of a book in Gurmukhi script. The research for material began shortly after Akbar's visit, early in 1599.

Guru Nanak had preserved his own compositions as well as those of some other *bhaktas*. When departing, he handed them over to his successor, Guru Angad. Following this example Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das preserved their own hymns. This individual collection was called *Bani Pothi* or Book of Hymns. The hymns were arranged by Guru Amar Das's grandson, Sahansar Ram, son of Mohan, in two volumes. One of them contained 300 leaves and the other 224 leaves. They were written in Gurmukhi. These volumes contained some hymns of Jaidev, Kabir, Ravidas, Sain and Trilochan. The second volume bears marks of revision. This was probably done by Guru Amar Das. These volumes are known as Goindwal manuscript. They were in possession of Mohan who lived at Goindwal. Guru Arjan wished to obtain them. First of all Bhai Gurdas went to Goindwal. Mohan shut himself up in a room in his house and did not respond to Gurdas's knocks at the door. He returned disappointed. Then Bhai Budha, a disciple recruited by Guru Nanak himself and who was held in the highest esteem, called at Mohan's house. Mohan again locked himself in. Bhai Budha tried knocking for a while, and afterwards broke open the door. Mohan was found in a trance. Mohan's younger brother Mohri, dissuaded Budha from disturbing Mohan in his *smadhi*. Finding his endeavours unavailing, he returned to Amritsar.

Then Guru Arjan went there himself in 1603 AD. He called out to him lovingly. There was no response. The Guru sat at the

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door and began to sing hymns in a melodious voice in praise of God and of Mohan, which is also another name of God:

"O Mohan, lofty is thy mansion, and matchless thy palace,
O Mohan, saints adorn the doors of thy temple
In thy temple they ever sing the praises of the infinite and merciful God.
Where the company of the saints assemble, there they meditate on thee.
Show compassion and kindness, O compassionate lord; be merciful to the poor.
Nanak representeth, I am thirsting for a sight of thee, grant it to me and all happiness shall be mine."

Mohan opened the door of his room in the upper storey and shouted at "the Guru with having taken the guruship out of his family, and come to steal the religious and literary memorials of his predecessors."[1] The Guru did not mind the outburst of Mohan's frustration and continued his praise in sweet, soft and soothing voice :

"O Mohan, incomparable are thy words, and superior thy deportment.
O Mohan, thou believest in one God, all others thou treatest as refuse. . .
Nanak representeth, preserve mine honour ; all Thy servants seek Thy sanctuary."

Mohan came down and sat by the Guru who continued his music even more enthusiastically:

"O Mohan, the company of saints meditate on thee and consider how they shall behold thee.
O Mohan, at the last hour Death shall not approach him who repeateth Thy name.
The god of death shall not touch him who with single heart meditateth on Thee.
All who worship Thee in thought, word, and deed, shall obtain the fruit thereof;
The impure, the foolish, and the stupid on beholding Thee obtain divine knowledge.
Nanak representeth, O Omnipresent God, abiding be Thy sovereignty."

The resplendent splendour of the Guru's face, his charming voice,

[1]Macauliffe, III, 55-56.

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penetrating songs and overpowering humility touched the tender chords of Mohan's heart and he delivered all the material he had with him. The Guru thanked him:

"O Mohan, thy children, friends, brethren and family, all hast thou saved—,——Endless are thine excellences;
They cannot be described——."[1]

Guru Arjan carried these two volumes in a palanquin. On his way back the Guru visited Khadur, and met Guru Angad's eldest son, Datu. The Guru requested him for any material containing hymns of Guru Nanak and Guru Angad. He pointed out some lose papers lying in a corner of the room. Guru Arjan collected them and took them with him. Teja Singh is of the view that they contained Guru Nanak's Sri Rag and other hymns as well as those of Guru Angad which were not included in the Goindwal volumes. Guru Arjan came to Amritsar. He collected hymns of Guru Ram Das and hunted out more material from other sources.

Guru Arjan felt extremely happy at his success. He told Bhai Gurdas that the Sikhs would now avoid imitation hymns of false Gurus.

Guru Arjan selected a nice shady place at Amritsar on the bank of a tank dug by him named Ramsar,[2] to the south-east of Amritsar, and took up his abode there. He asked Bhai Gurdas, a great scholar of Sanskrit, Persian, Hindi and Panjabi, to help him in giving a final shape to this material. Though the author is Arjan, the actual writer of the *Adi Granth* is Gurdas. He did it as a pure labour of love in order that he may bless the Sikhs with the wealth of dharmic wisdom.[3]

It was arranged in three parts. The first part consists of morning and evening prayers. They comprise Guru Nanak's *Japji* and other devotional hymns. The second part is the main body containing thirty Ragas. The third part is called Bhog di Bani. It includes panegyrics of the first five Gurus, some additional hymns of Guru Nanak, Amar Das, Ram Das, Arjan and Tegh Bahadur, Funhe and Swayyas of

[1]Macauliffe, III, 55-58.

[2]A gurdwara stands at this place opposite Sultanwind Gate. Kanhiya Lal, 25.

[3]Bhai Gurdas was a nephew of Guru Amar Das and was born in 1551. He was a great scholar of Sikh religion and so devoted was he to it that he never married. The copy of the sacred *Granth* written in his hand exists at Kartarpur near Jalandhar.

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Guru Arjan and sayings of Farid and Kabir, and of eleven bards. It concludes with Mundavāni, in which Guru Arjan explains the purpose of the Holy Book. The *Granth* was written in verse in Gurmukhi script It contained the Gurus hymns as follows :

1. Nanak, 976 hymns or 2949 stanzas; 2. Angad, 61 hymns; 3. Amar Das, 907 hymns; 4. Ram Das, 679 hymns; 5. Arjan, 2216 hymns and 116 shabads.

Later addition: 9. Tegh Bahadur, 116 shabads and two shalokas; 10. Gobind Singh, one shaloka.

The *Adi Granth* contains 3,384 hymns and 15,575 stanzas. Of these 13,658 stanzas are composed by Gurus and 1,917 stanzas are the compositions of saints and bards. About one-fifth hymns of the *Granth* are compositions of Guru Nanak. Some facts about the saints are given below :

No.	*Name*	*Caste*	*Date*	*Home*	*Number of verses in the Granth*
1.	Baini	×	12th century	×	19
2.	Bhikhan	×	D. 1573	Oudh	2
3.	Dhanna	Jat	Early 16th century	Rajasthan	6
4.	Farid	Afghan	1173-1265	Pakistan	116
5.	Jai Dev	Brahman	B. 1170	Bengal	6
6.	Kabir	Weaver	1440-1518	Banaras	122
7.	Nam Dev	Tailor	13th century	Maharashtra	245
8.	Parma Nand	×	A disciple of Rama Nand	Banaras	3
9.	Pipa	×	B. 1425	Rajasthan	2
10.	Rama Nand	Brahman	1360-1450	Banaras	3
11.	Ravi Das	Chamār	15th century	Banaras	41
12.	Sadhnā	Butcher	13th century	Sindh	4

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13.	Sâin	Barber	1390-1440	Madhya Pradesh	4
14.	Sur Das	Brahman	B. 1528	Haryana	2
15.	Trilochan	Vaish	B. 1267	Maharashtra	20
				Total	922

The 17 bards included in the *Granth* are : Bal, Bhal, Bhikha, Das, Gayand, Harbans, Jal, Jalap, Jalya, Kal, Kirar, Mathra, Nal, Sadrang, Sahar, Salya, Talya.

Besides it includes one hymn of Sundar, great grandson of Guru Amar Das and 3 hymns of Mardana, and 3 of Satta and Balwand who sang jointly. The last three were Muslims. The printed *Adi Granth* consists of 1430 pages, 5894 hymns and 15575 stanzas.

The distribution of pages is as follows: *Japji* 1-7; Musical hymns 8-1351, Shaloka Sanskriti 1352-59, Gatha 1359-61, Funhe 1361-62, Chaubole 1363-64, Shalokas of Kabir and Farid 1364-84, Swayyas of the Gurus and Bhattas 1384-1408, Shalokas of the Gurus 1409-28, Ragmala or Index of musical measures 1429-30.[1]

The hymns were not given in chronological order according to the Gurus but they were adjusted in accordance with thirty-one *Ragas* or musical measures such as Asa, Sorath and Ramkali. In fact there are 14 Ragas and 17 Raginis. The *Granth* was arranged on a fourfold basis—(1) *Ragas* or tunes in which the hymns were to be recited, (2) metre of the hymns, (3) authorship, and (4) key, clef or *ghar*. Guru Arjan used 31 *Ragas* only out of 84. Under each particular Raga the hymns of Guru Nanak are given first of all called Mahila or Mahalla One, Mahalla Two for Guru Angad, Mahalla Three for Guru Amar Das, Mahalla Four for Guru Ram Das, and Mahalla Five for Guru Arjan. The *Adi Granth* does not contain a word about the biographies of the Gurus. It consists only of prayers and devotional songs. In his last hymn Guru Arjan summed up the value of the *Granth* thus:

"In this dish are placed three things—Truth, Harmony and Wisdom. These are seasoned with the Name of God which is the basis of all. Whoever eats and enjoys it, shall be saved."[2]

Guru Arjan named it Pothi Sahib. *Pothi Parmeshwar ka than*. (The book is the abode of God).

[1]Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *The Quintessence of Sikhism*, 248.
[2]ibid.

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The *Adi Granth* was completed in Sawan Samvat 1661 (July, 1604). It was given to Bhai Banno for getting it bound at Lahore. Banno belonged to village Mangat in Gujrat district, Pakistan. His father was Bishan Chand Bhatia. He was one of the most faithful followers of Guru Arjan. The *Adi Granth* was written on loose sheets. It was to be bound in a beautiful hard cover. The good book-binders were available only at Lahore. Banno offered himself to take the volume to Lahore. The Guru graciously entrusted his life's treasure to him. Banno also secured Guru's permission to show the *Granth* to his own people at Mangat.

Banno engaged scribes to copy the *Granth*. He first went to Mangat and then came to Lahore. By this time the whole *Granth* had been copied. The two volumes were well bound. Banno came to Amritsar, and presented the Guru with both the bound volumes. The Guru was highly pleased. He put his signatures on the second volume certifying its authenticity. Banno brought it to Mangat and began daily recitation from it for the benefit of congregation.[1]

The original manuscript was installed in Hari Mandar at Amritsar after a grand ceremony on Bhadon Shudi one Samvat 1661 (16 August, 1604) in the presence of a large congregation. Bhai Budha was appointed the first Head *Granthi*.[2] In the Hari Mandar the worship of God simply consisted of recitations from the *Granth* to the accompaniment of musical instruments in a sweet and melodious voice and tune. No preaching and no discussions were permitted. The original copy of the *Adi Granth* of Guru Arjan exists in the Gurdwara at Kartarpur near Jalandhar.

Guru Arjan's compositions in the Adi Granth

Guru Arjan's main compositions are Bara Maha, Bāwan Akhri, Chau-

[1]Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *The Quintessence of Sikhism*, 243. Bhai Banno took this copy to his village, Mangat, in Tahsil Phalia of district Gujrat.

[2]During Guru Hargobind's imprisonment and later at the time of Hargobind's conflict with the Mughals, the original manuscript of the *Adi Granth* was taken possession of by the Guru's grandson Dhir Mal. He kept it at Kartarpur in Jalandhar district where he lived. When Hargobind settled at Kiratpur in the closing years of his life, Dhir Mal kept the Granth with him there also. Some Sikhs of Guru Tegh Bahadur seized it by force, but the Guru returned it to Dhir Mal. It is still available at Kartarpur. Its copies existed at Patna and Dhaka also. At the time of Guru Gobind Singh thirty copies of the *Adi Granth* were available at different places.

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bole, Funhe, Gātha, Sukhmani, Vār Basant, Vār Gujri, Vār Jaisri, Vār Maru and Vār Ramkali.

Sukhmani : The most popular of all these compositions is Sukhmani which is called the Psalm of Peace by Teja Singh. Its aim is to remove confusion of mind, disease and distress. Its recitation in the morning along with Guru Nanak's *Japji* is expected to soothe an afflicted heart and increase the joy and tranquillity.[1] It is a remedy against worldly troubles and turmoils which beset everybody sooner or later. It is divided into three parts. The first part pertains to the praise of God. He is formless, colourless, endless, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, impenetrable, inexpressible and unfathomable. The second part concerns morals. The sense-organs of a person try to lead one astray. Eyes have a seductive touch on seeing a beautiful object. Ears are pleased to listen to one's praise. Tongue prefers unwholesome victuals. Hands steal the property of others. Feet walk to commit crimes. All these are to be controlled.

The third part shows the righteous path. Of all religions and all the devotional practices, constant repetition of the Name is the best. The holiest place is where one gets the urge to recite Name in one's heart. The highest virtue is truth. God is truth and we can meet Him through truthful and pure living. Nothing is equal to the Name of Hari. Meet the Guru and keep company of holy men, surrender yourself completely to the True Guru. We cannot think of virtue without vice, pleasure without pain, salvation without bondage, health without disease, and life without death. God alone is the only source for physical, moral and spiritual well-being. God is truth and reality. Sing His praises, and God will take care of you.

Bārā Māhā : In Bārā Māhā the Guru points out the contrast between the moods of a *bhakta* and the moods of nature.

The sorrow of separation wastes away my body,
The koel calls in the mango groves,
Its notes are full of joy,
But there is sorrow in my soul.
The honey-bee hovers about the blossoming bough,
A messenger of love and hope.
But O Mother of mine, it is like death to me,
For there is sorrow in my soul.

[1]Teja Singh, *The Psalm of Peace*, v-vii.

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How shall I find peace and blessedness ?[1]

Guru Arjan's hymns show the depth of his feelings and sublimity of his thoughts. They give the measure of blissful life, penetrating light and sweet love.

Importance of the Granth

The compilation of the *Adi Granth* formed an important landmark in the history of the Sikhs. It became the sacred book of the new faith, and created consciousness among the Sikhs of their being a separate community. It served as a source of divine wisdom, felicity and bliss. Its fascinating hymns chanted in deep reverence and devotion inspired the minds of listeners to lofty ideas of plain living and high thinking. The *Granth* serves as the symbolic representation of the Gurus, who are considered as only one man, Nanak, the light of whose soul passed on to each of his successors one by one. The hymns establish a deep spiritual unity between man and God. The hymns of Bhaktas represent three schools of thought, Vaishnavism of Rama Nand, Krishna cult of Surdas and Sufism of Farid.

The *Adi Granth*, though purely a religious work, throws some light on political, social and cultural conditions of the times. In his hymns Guru Nanak called the kings butchers on account of their fanaticism and misgovernment. He compared the government officials with dogs because of their greed and lust. He depicts the sad plight of women in Babar's camp. He also makes a reference to the social customs practised at the time of a girl's marriage. Against the existing usage, Nanak accorded an equal status to women in his congregations and *langars*.

Guru Amar Das in his hymns incorporated in the *Granth* advised his disciples not to retaliate against their cruel treatment by Muslim officials in particular and Muslim population in general. He condemned *sati*, infanticide and *purdah*, and considerably added to the status of women.

Similarly Guru Arjan mentions Sulahi Khan's cruel conduct against him. Guru Tegh Bahadur also refers indirectly to the paralytic state of Hindus under Aurangzeb.

The arrangement of the *Granth* based upon Ragas gives us a glimpse into the development of Indian music. In matters religious the *Granth* affords a unique example of tolerance, as it contains hymns of Hindu and Muslim saints.

[1]Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *The Sikh Review*, November, 1981, 21.

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Useful information is also gathered about the food and dress of the people and about the various ceremonies, practices and institutions prevalent in society. For instance, there are references to chewing of *pān*, (betel-leaf), wearing of *dhotis* and blue clothes, prevalence of *sati* and *purdah*, existence of various castes and professions, sources of amusements and performance of numerous kinds of rites by the people.

Here and there the reader comes across enchanting scenes of nature's majesty. While turning its pages one is struck with the sublime beauty of dawn, birds singing the glory of sunrise, magnificence of rainy clouds, sweet music of rainfall and the cuckoo, the intoxicating dance of peacocks in mango groves, leaping deer in the jungles, and smiling grainfields.

The *Adi Granth* is like the holy water of the Ganga. Everybody, man or woman, rich and poor, high and low, Brahman or Shudra, white and black people, can have a dip without any restriction. The Ganga water washes dirt, cools body, and refreshes mind. Similarly the *Adi Granth* purifies heart, stimulates mind and animates the soul.

The *Granth* is a repository of many languages. The Guru's hymns are in a mixture of Hindi and Panjabi. The compositions of Rama Nand and Kabir are in pure Hindi. Farid's verses are in pure Panjabi. The language of Trilochan and Nam Dev is Marathi. *Adi Granth* contains words of Lahndi, Persian and Sindhi also.

The *Adi Granth* embraces territorially the whole of India and people of all castes and creeds. The Gurus themselves and Farid, a Muslim saint, belonged to Panjab, Surdas to Haryana, Kabir, Rama Nand and Ravi Das to U.P., Jai Dev to Bengal, Nam Dev, and Trilochan to Maharashtra, Sāin to Madhya Pradesh, Dhanna to Rajasthan, and Sadhnā to Sind. As regards religion Farid and Kabir and Mardana were Muslims. Of the Hindu castes Jai Dev, Rama Nand and Sur Das were Brahmans. The Gurus were Kshatriyas. Trilochan was a Vaish, Nam Dev. Ravi Das, Sadhnā and Sāin were Shudras, and Dhanna was a Jat. The *Adi Granth* is indeed the greatest work of Panjabi literature.

Akbar makes an offering to the Granth

In 1605 Emperor Akbar was at Batala during his visit to Panjab. A complaint was lodged with him that the *Adi Granth* contained some blasphemous passages to Islam. The emperor called for the *Granth* to his presence. The Guru sent it in the custody of Bhai Gurdas and

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Bhai Budha. Bhai Gurdas, who had written every word of it, assured the Emperor that there was nothing against Islam, and on the contrary it contained hymns of Muslim saints. Akbar got the *Granth* read out at random in the presence of learned Qazis and Pandits. On the first opening of the *Granth* a hymn said : We are all children of our Father God. On the second opening it stated : God pervades all His creation and the creation resides in Him. When there is nothing but God whom should one blame. On other pages also there was praise of God.

The Emperor was satisfied. He made an offering of 51 gold coins to the *Granth* and awarded robes of honour for the Guru and to both the custodians of the *Granth*.[1]

The first four Gurus were farmers or village grocers, and their Sikhs were petty peasants and tiny traders. Guru Arjan converted himself into a prince and made his Sikhs horse dealers buying them in Central Asia and selling them in India, timber and iron merchants, masons and carpenters, in addition to agriculturists.

The Guru's martyrdom, May 30, 1606

Unfortunately Guru Arjan was not destined to enjoy the fruits of his 25 year's hard labour. His popularity with Emperor Akbar and people of Majha and Doaba, his achievements of Hari Mandar and the holy *Granth*, and his princely style of living had become to his enemies a matter of great agony and anguish more than flesh and blood could bear. One of his enemies was his own elder brother Prithi Mal who was living at Amritsar. The second enemy lived at Batala, the district headquarters, third at Lahore, fourth at Sarhind and fifth at Delhi. Thus the sacred number of five of Hindu and Sikh mythology had become a curse in the case of Guru Arjan.

1. *Prithi Mal and his son Meharban* : They called themselves the real Gurus. Both of them were composing hymns and were declaring them as those of Guru Nanak. Meharban wrote a Janam Sakhi of Guru Nanak, in which he glorified his father and discredited Guru Nanak. He composed a Sukhmani in opposition to Guru Arjan's Sukhmani. Both father and son were plotting against Guru Arjan.

2. *Sulahi Khan of Batala* : Sulahi Khan was the Mughal officer of Batala district. He was determined to bring about Guru's ruin. Under severe persecution the Guru had to leave Amritsar for Chheharta. He was so bitterly hostile to him that the Guru mentioned him in his

[1]Mangal Singh, *Baba Budha Sahib*, 202.

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hymns in the *Adi Granth*. God rescued the Guru from Sulahi's clutches. One day while riding a new horse he was trying to gallop. Something frightened the horse who, perhaps due to some wild honey bees, fled headlong into the fields in the direction of a smouldering brick kiln. The horse sank into the hollow ground of the kiln alongwith its rider who was firmly holding its reins, and both were burnt alive. Guru Arjan refers to this incident in Bilawal hymn:

"God preserved me from Sulahi,
Sulahi by no means succeeded;
Sulahi died unclean,
God drew forth His axe and smote off his head, and in a moment he became ashes.
He was consumed ever meditating evil;
He who created him thrust him into the fire."[1]

3. *Chandu Shah* : Chandu Shah, a Khatri of Lahore, who held an important post in the finance ministry at Delhi. He was in search of a groom for his daughter. Messengers were sent to find out a suitable boy. One of them recommended Hargobind, son of Guru Arjan. Chandu Shah remarked: "What if he hath many followers ? He liveth on offerings, which is an ignominious form of livelihood." He further added that the proposal amounted to putting "the ornamental tile of a top storey into a gutter."[2] But being persuaded by his wife, Chandu Shah agreed and conveyed the proposal through a messenger. His remarks about the Guru were soon known to the Sikhs living in Delhi. They requested the Guru to turn down the proposal. The Guru did so. Further persuasion by Chandu Shah proved of no avail. He "went in person to soothe the Guru with a lakh of rupees; but it was too late; for the Guru declared: 'My words are engraved on stone, and cannot be effaced. If you give me the whole world as a dowry with your daughter, my son will not marry her.'[3]

4. *Shaikh Ahmad Faruqi Sarhindi (1563-1625)* : In those days Sarhind was the stronghold of Naqshbandi order. The first millennium or a period of one thousand years of the foundation of Islam was over and the second millennium had begun. Shaikh Ahmad declared that the first millennium belonged to Prophet Muhammad and the second millennium to him. He took the title of *qayum* or the deputy of God. The whole universe including sun, moon and earth was under

[1]Macauliffe, III, 86-87.
[2]ibid, 73-76.
[3]Latif, *Panjab*, 254.

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his control. Nobody's prayer could reach God unless it was first accepted by him. He had a large number of followers. They designated him Majaddid Alif Sāni meaning controller of the universe in the second millennium. The Sikh Gurus called themselves Insan-ul-Kamil or perfect men. The Shaikh asserted that *qayum* was higher than Sikh Gurus. Guru Arjan did not accept this view.[1]

The Shaikh was extremely jealous of Guru Arjan's popularity and power. He was a revivalist of Islam. He "made the revival of orthodoxy something of a movement."[2] He made use of the royal power as "Jahangir himself was inclined towards the purification of beliefs and practices."[3] It is said that "Shaikh Ahmad eradicated the godlessness of Akbar's reign; forced the court to reform its etiquette and made large number of Muslims in the army and the court."[4] He was given the titles of 'Reviver of the Second Millennium', and the 'Godly Imam'. The Shaikh greatly incited Jahangir against Guru Arjan when he called at Sarhind in pursuit of Khusrau. The Shaikh also exercised great influence on the courtiers of Jahangir.[5] The Shaikh declared Guru Arjan Kulah-e-Sharik and Imam-e-Kufr. Jahangir was greatly influenced by the Shaikh.

5. *The Emperor Jahangir* : The orthodox Muslim Ulama, all political leaders and the Muslim population had deeply resented Akbar's policy of liberality and toleration The liberal element at the court was in a very small minority. They favoured Akbar's grandson and Prince Salim's son Khusrau in the absence of any law of succession in the Mughal empire. The orthodox group which was in very great majority supported Prince Salim (Jahangir), the only living son of Emperor Akbar. They extracted a definite and solemn promise from Prince Salim to reverse Akbar's policy as the price of their support. The leaders of orthodox ulama were Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi and Shaikh Farid Bukhari.[6] Under their influence Prince Salim had administered poison to Akbar in 1591 from which the Emperor had survived. In 1601 he openly revolted against his father and assumed the royal title. In 1602 he got Prime Minister Abul Fazl murdered, because he was

[1]Ram Pujan Tiwari, *Sufimat, Sadhana aur Sahitya*, 502.
[2]M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 243.
[3]ibid, 244.
[4]ibid, 247.
[5]ibid.
[6]N.D. Ahuja, *The Sikh Review*, December, 1980, 11.

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the greatest supporter of Akbar in his liberalism.[1]

The Sayyids of Barha, well-known for their religious zeal and bravery, were won over by the ulama in favour of Salim. This prince took solemn oaths to restore orthodoxy, punish the liberal group and destroy non-Muslim movements.

Prince Khusrau meets Guru Arjan

Akbar died on October 17, 1605. The throne was contested by Prince Khusrau. His mother was Jodha Bai, daughter of Udai Singh, Raja of Jodhpur. He was born in 1592. On Khusrau's capture she took poison and died on 6 May, 1606.[2] Salim eventually succeeded under the title of Jahangir. Khusrau managed to escape from Agra fort on April 6, 1606, and made for Panjab. The Prince, in the company of Akbar, had already met Guru Arjan and knew him to be a sage and moneyed man. He sought benediction of the Guru at Taran Tāran where Arjan was then staying Guru Arjan, as in the case of every visitor of high position, particularly of the royal family, warmly received him by applying a saffron mark on his forehead according to ancient custom of India.

Applying the *tilak* implied only honourable reception and not blessing the prince with sovereignty. Mohsin Fani says that the Guru offered prayers for the Prince.[3] The prayer indicated a wish for the safety of the individual as the Prince was on his journey and not for his cause. The Guru was an embodiment of moral virtues and could not bless a son in rebellion against the father. He could not forget the case of his own elder brother who had revolted against his father. The Guru could never contemplate involving himself in the struggle for the throne. This was a political matter and the Guru had nothing to do with it. Bhai Gurdas who wrote the *Adi Granth* in his Var no. 37 condemns filial misconduct in these words:

"He who forsaketh his parents to listen to the Vedas, shall never know their secret. He who forsaketh his parents to perform penance in the forest, shall go astray in the wilderness. He who forsaketh his parents to worship gods and goddesses, shall lose the reward of his

[1]V.A. Smith, *Akbar*, 301-3,311, 316, 321-23; Beni Prasad, *History of Jahangir*, 51, 61-62.

[2]Jahangir highly praises Khusrau's mother: "I cannot describe her virtues and nobleness. She possessed inimitable wisdom. She would sacrifice a thousand sons and brothers for one hair of mine." *Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri*, Syed Ahmud, 26.

[3]*The Dabistan*, 234.

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devotion. He who forsaketh his parents to bathe in the sixty-eight places of pilgrimage, shall find them a whirlpool to drown him. He who forsaketh his parents to give alms, shall be deemed without faith or knowledge. He who forsaketh his parents to fast, shall die and be born again and stray in superstition. Such a person knoweth nothing of God or the Guru."[1]

Such is the denunciation of the disobedience of parents and unfilial conduct. For a rebel against parents there is absolutely no room in Sikhism. This is considered as one of the most reprehensible acts.

The Prince then begged the Guru to help him with money. Guru Arjan replied that his money was meant for the poor and not for princes. Khusrau humbly pleaded that he was also very poor, needy, forlorn and in distress, and did not possess even travelling expenses for his proposed flight to Kabul. The Guru was moved at the 13-year-old Prince's sad plight, humility and the dangerous state he was in being hotly pursued by the Mughal army and the Emperor himself. According to Macauliffe Khusrau was provided with a few thousand rupees. Beni Prasad in his *History of Jahangir*[2] puts this amount at Rs. 5,000.

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Jahangir's hatred for the Guru

Jahangir hated Guru Arjan for several reasons. He was opposed to all those who had been in Akbar's good books Secondly, Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi incited Jahangir against Guru Arjan when he halted at Sarhind in pursuit of Khusrau. Thirdly, Shaikh Farid Bukhari was leading the vanguard of the army which was pursuing the Prince. He was the first leader to know about Khusrau's visit to the Guru He declared that the Guru should have captured him and ought to have handed him over to the Emperor. He therefore considered the Guru a rebel. Jahangir also took the same view. He wrote in his autobiography:

"A Hindu named Arjan lived at Goindwal on the bank of river Beas in the garb of a Pir and Shaikh. As a result many of the simple-minded Hindus as well as ignorant and foolish Muslims had been persuaded to adopt his ways and manners, and he had raised aloft the standard of sainthood and holiness. He was called Guru. From all sides cowboys and idiots became his fast followers. This business

[1]Macauliffe, IV, 271.
[2]p. 130.

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had been flourishing for three or four generations. For a long time it had been in my mind to put a stop to this vain affair (*dukān-e-bātil*) or to bring him into the fold of Islam. In these days when Khusrau passed along this road, this foolishly insignificant fellow (*mardak-e-majhūl*) proposed to wait on him. Khusrau happened to halt at the place where he lived. He came and met him. He discussed several matters with him and made on his forehead a finger-mark in saffron. In the terms of Hindus it is called *Qashqa* and is considered propitious."[1]

In pursuit of Khusrau Jahangir halted at Goindwal while his army had gone ahead to capture Khusrau. Jahangir writes:

"I call God to witness that while at Goindwal, at this perilous crisis, I experienced some strong forebodings that Khossrow was coming to my presence." Just then the news came that royal forces were victorious and Khusrau had been taken prisoner.[2]

Jahangir summons the Guru to Lahore

Khusrau was arrested on the eastern bank of river Chenab on April 26, 1606. He was produced before Jahangir on May 1 and was partially blinded. The Emperor then summoned Guru Arjan to Lahore. The Guru had realized that being surrounded by enemies on all sides his end was near. Before his departure he consoled his wife Ganga thus: "This body abideth not for ever. Wherefore a wise person should not love it Whatever is born perisheth, and whatever is high falleth sooner or later. This is nature's law . . . Live thou when I am gone, mourn not for me, and make no effort of thine own to separate thy soul from thy body."[3]

Jahangir asked him why he had helped Khusrau. The Guru replied that he gave him some money for his journey and not to help him in rebellion against him. He was in a wretched condition. He had to show him some consideration out of regard for Emperor Akbar who had been very kind to him. Heartlessness and ingratitude were opposed to the principles of Guru Nanak's house. Jahangir did not feel satisfied. He wanted to punish him with death. But on the recommendation of Mian Mir commuted it by a fine of two lakhs of rupees, and ordered him to efface certain verses in the *Adi Granth*. Arjan replied: "Whatever money I have is for the poor, the friendless, and the stranger. If

[1]*Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri*, 25; Syud Ahmud, *Toozuk-i-Jahangeeree*, 34.
[2]Jahangir, *Tarikh-e-Salim Shahi*, *E&D*, VI, 272.
[3]Macauliffe, III, 90-91.

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thou ask for money thou mayest take what I have; but if thou ask for it by way of fine I shall not give thee even a *kauri*, for a fine is imposed on wicked worldly persons and not on priests and anchorites. And as to what thou hast said regarding the erasure of hymns in the *Granth Shaib*, I cannot erase or alter an iota."[1]

Confiscation and torturing to death

The Sikhs of Lahore showed willingness to raise subscriptions to pay the fine. The Guru issued strict injunctions not to do so.[2] Jahangir writes : "I ordered that he should be summoned. His houses, camps and sons were given over to Murtza Khan.[3] His property and cash were confiscated. I issued instructions that he should be put to death by torture."[4] Murtza Khan deputed Chandu Shah to confiscate the Guru's property, and he fleeced the Guru's family of everything of value. Trilochan Singh in his *Guru Tegh Bahadur* states: "According to this order Guru Arjan was no doubt tortured to death, but the rest of the order was definitely stayed by the intervention of Saint Mian Mir. Neither were the houses and children made over to Murtza Khan nor was the property confiscated."[5] The same view is held by Khushwant Singh who writes: "The Emperor's order to arrest the Guru's family and confiscate his property was not carried out."[6] This is an unjustifiable assumption.

That Guru Arjan was fined Rs. 2 lakhs is admitted by all. The Guru's property was confiscated, but it did not fetch two lakhs in those days when prices were extremely low. Besides who was going to buy Hari Mandar and 4 or 5 tanks built by Guru Arjan? Mohsin Fani, the contemporary author of *the Dabistan*[7] writes: "Jahangir demanded the balance (*bāqīat*) of the fine imposed on Arjan Mal, and sent Hargobind to Gwalior where he lived for twelve years."

Further there is a reference to the confiscation of Guru's houses and lands in *Akhbarat-e-Durbar-e-Muālla*. On 30 December, 1711, Emperor Bahadur Shah, having failed to capture Banda Bahadur on his way

[1]Macauliffe, III, 91.

[2]ibid, 92.

[3]Shaikh Farid Bukhari, head of the orthodox ulama at the court, was given the title of Murtza Khan, and was appointed viceroy of the Panjab.

[4]*Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri*, 35.

[5]p. 37.

[6]*A History of the Sikhs*, I, 63.

[7]p. 234.

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to Lahore, while passing through Amritsar, ordered "the release of the long confiscated lands of Chak Guru, Amritsar, in the name of Ajit Singh mentioned in the Akhbarat as the son of Guru Gobind Singh."[1]

The Guru was imprisoned in the Lahore Fort. May-June are the hottest months there. He was chained to a post in an open place exposed to the sun from morning to evening. Below his feet a heap of sand was put which burnt like a furnace. Boiling water was poured on his naked body at intervals. His body was covered with blisters all over. In this agony the Guru used to utter.

Terā kiyā mitha lāge
Nām padārath Nanak māngе

[Whatever you ordain appears sweet. I supplicate for the gift of Name.]

Mian Mir's visit

On hearing the news of Guru Arjan's tortures Mian Mir came to see him. At the sight of the Guru, the Muslim saint shed tears of blood. He cursed the government for these atrocities on an innocent man of God. In his agony he began to cry. He said he would pray for the destruction of such a cruel government. The Guru though writhing in pain calmed Mian Mir. He said this was the will of God, and no man should try to obstruct the working of His will. He expressed satisfaction at the saint's visit. He said it had brought him cooling breeze in the burning heat. Sorrow had given place to joy. Whatever was happening, it must be taken for one's good and must be cheerfully accepted. The Guru forbade the saint to do anything against the government. Mian Mir prayed and left the Guru with a heavy heart.[2]

The Guru's death

The Guru suffered from 'heat apoplexy.' Sewing up political prisoners in fresh hides of animals seems to be a general practice in those days. A month earlier two main supporters of Khusrau had been treated similarly. Husain Beg was sewn in a fresh ox hide and Abdur Rahim in the green skin of an ass. The same punishment was now proposed for the Guru. When the raw hide of a cow was brought before him, he shuddered at its sight. The Guru asked permission to bathe in the Ravi as he did not want to die unclean. He was sent

[1]Ganda Singh, *The Sikh Review*, January, 1972, 11.
[2]Rose, *Glossary of Punjab Tribes and Castes*, I, 683.

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thither with a strong escort, but the swift current owing to the melting of snow carried away his weak and emaciated body. This took place on 30 May, 1606.[1]

The Guru was only 43 years old. His *smadhi* was later on erected at the site on the bank of river Ravi opposite to the Fort of Lahore.

Nature of persecution

The Sikh tradition considers it an act of religious persecution. It is true the Sikhs at this time formed only a religious society. They had no political consciousness. So the question of having any political aspirations does not arise. The authority of the Mughal Emperors was fully accepted and implicitly obeyed. The Sikh allegiance to the State was complete. Akbar's patronage to the Sikh Gurus was highly appreciated and their loyalty to the Mughal Empire was firm. It is also a fact that Jahangir was biased against Sikh religion.[2] In spite of this, in matters religious, he held, on the whole, liberal views. If Guru Arjan had arrested Khusrau and handed him over to Farid Bukhari, it appears certain that the Emperor would not have taken any notice of the Sikh movement. He did not persecute the Sikhs. Beni Prasad in his *History of Jahangir* declares it a political execution.

Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes: "Arjan in a weak moment blessed the banners of Khusrau, the rival of Jahangir for Mughal throne, and even gave money help to that prince. On the defeat of the pretender, Jahangir fined the Guru two lakhs of rupees for his disloyalty to the king *de jure*. The Guru refused to pay the fine and stoically endured imprisonment and torture which were the usual punishments of revenue defaulters in those days. Worn out by being forced to sit in the burning sand of Lahore, he died in June 1606."[3] Sir Jadunath is absolutely wrong in calling the Guru a revenue defaulter.

It is certain that Guru Arjan's martyrdom was mainly a religious

[1]Major Henry Court, *Sikhan De Raj Di Vithya*, 22; Latif, *Panjab*, 254, fn.

[2]Mohsin Fani who was born only nine years later writes: "The Emperor Nur-ud-din Muhammad Jahangir called Arjan Mal to account for his having offered prayers for his son Prince Khusrau who had rebelled against his father. Khusrau having been captured, the King demanded a large sum of money from the Guru by way of fine. The Guru was helpless in paying it. They kept him a prisoner in the sandy country of Lahore. Under the excessive heat of the burning sun and torture of the bailiffs he passed away." *The Dabistan*, 234.

[3]*Short History of Aurangzib*, 156.

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case coupled with local and personal jealousy and envy. Whatever the case might be there is no doubt that Guru Arjan set the noblest example of courage and boldness in resisting the wrongs of the mightiest power on earth, and thus sowed the seed which was to bear rich fruit in due course. Trumpp says that "Guru Arjan's death is the great turning point in the development of Sikh community, as from that time the struggle commenced that changed the entire character of reformatory religious movement."[1]

Shaikh Ahmad of Sarhind expressed utmost delight at Guru Arjan's murder. In a letter written to Shaikh Farid Bukhari entitled Murtza Khan, the Governor of Panjab, he said:

"The execution at this time of the accursed Kafir of Goindwall . . with whatever motive . . . is an act of the highest grace for the followers of Islam."[2] He added that the Hindus should be treated as dogs. Jazia should be imposed upon them and cowslaughter should be allowed in the open.[3]

Bhai Gurdas's tacit comments

Bhai Gurdas has written many verses about Guru Arjan, but he is silent about the Guru's tortures and martyrdom. The reason is obvious. The Guru had bitterest foes in high position. He had already seen that Emperor Akbar had examined the holy *Granth* on the complaint of Guru's enemies. Akbar was Guru's patron. Jahangir was his enemy. Any written word by Gurdas in this respect would have been immediately reported to the Emperor. At such a critical juncture he did not think it proper that the Sikh religion should be deprived of his services. In case of his mentioning this great event, he was sure to be tortured to death. His observations about Guru Arjan are given below :

Profound indeed was Guru Arjan's martyrdom. As a fish swims into the depth of flowing water, so Guru Arjan lived deep into the eterna stream of Lord's presence. As the moth flings its body into flame sacrificing itself on it, so Guru Arjan submitted his body to the torture of fire and heat and blended his soul with the undying flame of God.

As a deer cares not for the deadly arrows of the hunter but runs

[1] *Adi Granth*, LXXXII.

[2] *Maktubat-e-Imam Rabbani*, I, part III, letter no. 193 quoted by Ganda Singh in *Guru Nanak*, 94-95.

[3] Ibid.

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heedlessly towards the call of the drum, Guru Arjan cared not for the cruel hands of the murderer but marched on fearlessly to face a martyr's death, keeping all the time his mind absorbed in the celestial music within his soul. Even at the severest torture and at the most tragic moment of his end, he thought not of anything else but the enchanting of Heaven's symphony within his mind.

As a butterfly, when trapped in the petals of the lotus flower dies in the joy of its fragrance and honey, so Guru Arjan cared not for any physical torture but kept his mind unsullied in the fragrance of the Lord's love.

Like a rainbird, thirsting only for a drop of rain and no other water, Guru Arjan abandoned all worldly opportunities offered to him and desired but an abiding repose in the love and will of God. So deeply was he absorbed in the undisturbed and unbroken vision of the Lord, that his enlightened and elevated spirit conquered all sorrow and pain and his soul rested peacefully in the eternal embrace of God's love. I am a sacrifice unto Guru Arjan, the Perfect one.[1]

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[1] *The Spokesman Weekly*, August, 1981, 103.

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CHAPTER 9

Religion in Revolt and Pacifism, (VI, VII and VIII Gurus, 1606-1664)

Guru Hargobind, 1606-44

Became Guru at eleven

Guru Arjan in captivity and under the severest torture, concentrated on God and sought divine light and guidance to save the nascent religion from annihilation. The only solution revealed to him was to guard it with the aid of arms. He pondered over it again and again and concluded that this was the only remedy. Hence he sent to his eleven-year-old son and successor, Hargobind, a '*bel*' fruit (wood apple or aegle marmelos) with five copper pice as a token of his nomination[1] with his last injunction through a Sikh: "Let him sit fully armed on his throne and maintain an army to the best of his ability."[2]

Guru Hargobind was born at Wadali 8 kilometres west of Amritsar, on June 14, 1595. He proved himself a saint, sportsman and soldier, and was the first national military hero of the people of Panjab in six hundred years since the conquest of Panjab by Muslims.

Measures Adopted by Him

Two swords

On receiving his father's last message and the news of his death, Bhai Budha performed the ceremony of succession to guruship He applied *tilak* on Hargobind's forehead. The Guru then asked Bhai Budha to adore him with a sword. The Bhai had never handled a sword, and he tied it on the right side of the Guru who pointed out the mistake. The Bhai wanted to put it on the other side. The Guru forbade him to do so. He asked Bhai Budha to fasten another sword on the left side. Thus the Guru wore two swords simultaneously. He declared that the two swords signified *Miri* and *Piri*, *Shakt* and *Bhakti*,

[1]Kanhiya Lal, *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, 28. The bel fruit ripens in May-June.
[2]Macauliffe, III, 99.

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deg and *teg*. One symbolised temporal power and the other spiritual power; one to smite the oppressor, the other to protect the innocent. He told his followers: "In the Guru's house spiritual and mundane powers shall be combined." There deg or meals for friends and teg or punishment for foes would always be ready. "My rosary shall be the sword-belt and on my turban I shall wear the emblem of royalty."[1] He instructed the Sikhs to keep a sword and a horse. Hargobind carried the torch lit by Nanak; but he added to it the lustre of the sword. He gave the same message as that of Nanak; but he added to it the challenge of a hero. Besides in those days there was no restriction on keeping arms. Guru Arjan's men going to Central Asian countries to purchase horses could not travel without arms. Thus the use of sword, bows and arrows and even a gun was a common thing for personal safety and security.

Recruits troops

He excelled his father in state and splendour. He armed and drilled some of his sturdy disciples. In due course from an inherited bodyguard of 52 soldiers he came to possess a stable of seven hundred horses, three hundred horsemen and sixty gunners (*topchi*).[2] Five hundred young men from Majha, territory lying between the Ravi and the Beas, the Doaba between the Beas and the Satluj and Malwa between the Satluj and the Ghaggar, were recruited as infantry.[3] Besides many who were satisfied with two meals a day and a new uniform every half-year joined the Guru.[4] They believed that by fighting for the Guru in the cause of righteousness they would attain salvation (*mukti*). He demanded gifts of arms and horses. He built a fort at Amritsar called Lohgarh or fortress of steel. He had his own flag and a nagāra or a big drum which was beaten at sunrise and sunset. The Mughal officers believed that all this had a political complexion.

Meat diet and hunting

Hargobind sanctioned and encouraged meat diet and hunting. He was a fine hunter himself. In a short time he understood the ways of the beasts of the forest. He loved to chase and stalk wild boar. He surpassed in hunting deer. Directly the affairs of the community were

[1]Macauliffe, IV, 2 ; Sarkar, *A Short History of Aurangzib*, 156.
[2]*The Dabistan*, 235-36.
[3]Macauliffe, IV, 4.
[4]Ibid, 5.

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over, he would mount his charger and go into a dense jungle "accompanied by an army of forest beaters, hounds, tame leopards (*sic, cheetahs*) and hawks of every variety."[1] At nightfall he would return home with the carcases of animals he had killed. These he caused to be distributed among his disciples and the poor people living near the place The contemporary author Mohsin Fani narrates a story. A Hindu named Pratab Mal Giani admonished his son who was inclined to become a Musalman thus: "If you want to get full freedom in eating, you may become a Sikh of the Guru and then eat whatever you like."[2]

Akal Takht

In front of Hari Mandar he constructed in 1606 Akal Takht or God's throne. There he sat on a raised platform 12 feet high[3] in princely attire. Hari Mandar was the seat of his spiritual authority and Akal Takht the seat of his temporal authority. There he administered justice like a king in court, accepted presents of arms and horses and awarded honours and punishments. He watched wrestling matches and shooting exercises with arrows and matchlocks. He narrated stories of deathless bravery, while some professional bards, the most notable of whom were Abdullah, Babak and Natha, sang popular ballads of unrivalled heroism, especially of Rajput chivalry. The tales of the valour of Jaimal and Fatta of Chitor, being of recent origin, were sung with zeal and zest.

This was the beginning of militarism or the transformation of Sikhism. To the symbols of sainthood was added the paraphernalia of sovereignty including the umbrella and the crest. With meditation and preaching were included riding, wrestling and hunting. "The genial disposition of the martial apostle," says Cunningham, "led him to rejoice in the companionship of a camp, in the dangers of war, and in the excitements of the chase."[4] This was the first takht in sikh history.

State within a state

The Guru created a government of his own like that of the Mughals.

[1]Macauliffe, IV, 5.
[2]*The Dabistan*, 239.
[3]Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 12, fn., 16.
[4]*A History of the Sikhs*, 50.

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All his disciples formed a separate and independent entity, and had nothing to do with the agencies of the government of the day. Thus the Sikhs came to occupy a kind of a separate state within the Mughal State, the position of which was securely established by the fiscal policy of Guru Amar Das and Guru Arjan and his own armed system.

Congregational prayers

Hargobind established congregational prayers which not only added to the religious fervour of the Sikhs, but also strengthened the spirit of unity and cooperation among them. According to Mohsin Fani when a Sikh wished for God's favour or gift, he would come to an assembly of the Sikhs and would request them to pray for him. Even the Guru himself asked the Sikh congregation (*Sangat* or *Anjuman-e-Sikhan*) to pray for him.[1]

His missionaries

Hargobind did not neglect his work of preaching and spreading Sikh religion. The activities of Guru Arjan's *masands* were mainly confined to the Panjab. The political situation in Panjab was not favourable for the propagation of Sikhism. The Guru turned his attention to the hills and to far off provinces of Bihar and Bengal. The Guru did not admit the Udasis to Sikhism, but encouraged them to convert people in the northern hills to Sikhism. The hilly region was ruled over by numerous Rajput princes, and the Mughal domination was confined only to the realization of tribute.

Further there were a number of Sikh merchants carrying on trade in U.P., Bihar and Bengal. They visited the Guru at the time of departure from and return to their homes. The Guru instructed them to preach Sikh religion. Bhai Gurdas in *Var II* mentions the names of Nawal and Nihala, two Sabharwal Khatris, who had established their business in Bihar. Under their influence a number of local persons had adopted Sikhism.[2]

His enemies

1. *Prithi Mal*: The Guru's uncle Prithi Mal continued intrigues against Hargobind. Some Sikhs became his followers also. Mohsin

[1] *The Dabistan*, 239.
[2] Indarajit Prasad Singh, *The Sikh Review*, March, 1978, 63.

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Fani writes: "In short after Arjan Mal his brother Prithia called by his disciples Guru Meharban began to oppose him." He further says that "Prithia's followers called themselves Bhagats or *Paristar-e-Khuda*. The disciples of Guru Hargobind, son of Arjan Mal, named them Mina which is a term of contempt."[1] Prithi Mal continuously complained against the Guru to the Mughal officers of the province as well as directly to the Emperor. Prithi Mal called himself the sixth Guru and his son Meharban declared himself as the seventh Guru.

2. *Chandu Shah*: Diwan Chandu Shah must have been sharing in these nefarious activities. Chandu Shah had made further approaches to Guru Hargobind to marry his daughter. The messenger sent by the Diwan to Amritsar reported: "His glory is twice, nay four times greater than that of any previous Guru. His predecessors used to sit on couches, he sitteth upon a throne. He weareth arms, calleth himself the true king, taketh presents like an emperor, maintaineth an army of a thousand brave youths, and careth for nobody."[2] The Guru spurned the offer.

3. *Shaikh Ahmad*: Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, a deadly foe of Sikh Gurus, and a favourite of Jahangir, must have incited the Emperor.

4. Shaikh Farid Bukhari (Murtga Khan), viceroy of the Panjab, was his enemy.

5. *Jahangir*: The reports against king-like and war-like activities of the Guru aroused the anger of Jahangir. The Emperor was persuaded to believe that Guru Hargobind intended to raise the standard of revolt. He had visited Panjab in 1606, 1607, and 1608. The Guru's enemies must have lodged complaints against him personally. Jahangir ordered the Guru to pay the balance of the fine of two lakhs imposed upon Guru Arjan after deducting the amounts already realized by auctioning his property. Mohsin Fani writes: "He had to contend with difficulties. One of them was that he had adopted the style of a soldier, wore a sword contrary to the practice of his father, kept a retinue and took to hunting. Hazrat Jannat Makani (Jahangir) demanded the balance of the fine which he had imposed on Arjan Mal."[3]

Imprisoned at Gwalior, 1609-1620

Guru Hargobind was summoned to Delhi. Hargobind entrusted

[1] *The Dabistan*. 234. Prithia's descendants still exist at Guru Har Sahai, 35 kilometres south of Firozpur. His relics are preserved in a Gurdwara there.

[2] Macauliffe, IV, 10.

[3] *The Dabistan*, 234.

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secular affairs of the Sikhs to Bhai Budha and control of spiritual duties to Bhai Gurdas, though Bhai Budha continued to work as high priest of Hari Mandar.

At Delhi the Guru stayed at Majnun ka Tila[1] on the bank of river Yamuna where Guru Nanak had lived with the Muslim saint Majnun in the reign of Sikandar Lodi. Large crowds of Sikhs came to see him. Jahangir found him a handsome and plucky youth and received him courteously. He asked him several questions but Jahangir did not feel satisfied. With regard to fine Hargobind advanced the old argument of his father. He said he had not committed any crime and he would not pay any fine. As for his taking to hunting and wearing arms, no restrictions had been imposed by the government on its subjects. About his holding courts the Guru submitted that it concerned only religious matters. There was no politics behind it, and he did not preach anything against the Emperor or his government. He assured the Emperor that he was a loyal subject of His Majesty's Government and always abided by its laws.

Jahangir invited the Guru to join him in a hunting expedition, when Hargobind displayed his skill by slaying a tiger. The Emperor took the Guru with him on a visit to Agra. On the way he enquired why he was called the true king which implied that the Emperor was a false king. The Guru replied: "I have never told anyone to call me true king, but where there exists love between people, there is no need of formality, and a man is treated as he treateth others. I love my Sikhs in proportion to the love they bear me."[2] At Agra the Emperor fell ill. Due to Chandu Shah's instigation the astrologers told Jahangir to imprison Hargobind to avert the serious consequences of the evil stars. Hargobind was therefore confined in the fort of Gwalior,[3] without specifying any duration.

Jahangir wrote in his diary: I ordered that he should be produced in my court. He obeyed orders. He could not give proper replies to my questions. I found him without wisdom and sagacity, and extre-

[1]Brajkishan Chandiwala, *Dill ki Khoj*, 184.

[2]Macauliffe, IV, 19.

[3]ibid, 19-22. The Mughals had established three royal prisons in India. Criminal condemned to death were sent to Ranthambor where they were hurled down from the top of the fort over the craggy rocks. Before reaching the ground their bodies were torn to pieces. Persons sentenced to life imprisonment were kept in the fort of Rohtas. Gwalior was reserved for such princes and nobles as offended.

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mely arrogant (*bighāyat maghrūr wa khudpasand*). I thought it was necessary to confine him for a few days in a disciplinary jail (*zindan-e-adal*) so that his brain and temper may be somewhat rectified and the peoples' commotion may subside. I therefore entrusted him to the stone-hearted (*sangdilan*) Bani Rae to keep him a prisoner in the fort of Gwalior.[1]

Some writers are of the view that Guru Hargobind was kept in prison for a short time. Giani Gian Singh[2] says that the Guru lived in the fort for two months only. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh write: "The period of Guru's stay there is stated by Mohsin Fani to be 12 years, which is impossible on the very face of it, as during these very years, several children were born to him: Gurditta in 1613, Viro in 1615, Suraj Mal in 1617, Ani Rai in 1618, Atal in 1619 and Tegh Bahadur in 1621. The Guru could not have spent more than two years at Gwalior, and must have returned some time in 1614."[3]

Mohsin Fani, the author of the *Dabistan*, was 20 years younger than Guru Hargobind. He frequently met the Guru and his Sikhs. With one Sikh named Sadh he travelled from Kabul to Lahore, a distance of about 800 kilometres. He was in correspondence with the Guru. He stayed at Kiratpur for a long time and attended the Guru's funeral. He wrote the account of the Sikhs at the age of 30 when all his mental faculties were at their zenith. He clearly states that his account of the Sikhs up to the fifth Guru was written after personal investigation, and that of the sixth and the seventh Gurus was recorded on personal observation. Mohsin Fani travelled all over the country collecting material for his book entitled *Dabistan-e-Mazahib*. It is not possible to believe that the learned author could have written twelve years in place of two years. He is quite emphatic on this point. He writes: "Hargobind was sent to Gwalior. He lived there for twelve years. He was not allowed to have even saltish food. During that period *Masands* and Sikhs used to go there, and paid homage below the fort wall. At last Hazrat Jannat Makani was kind enough to set him free."[4]

It is clear that the Guru was imprisoned for an indefinite period and was set free after twelve years on the recommendation of Mian

[1] *Toozuk-I-Jehangeeree*, Alligurh, 1864, p. 273,
[2] *Panth Prakash*, 124.
[3] *A Short History of the Sikhs*, 40, fn. 1.
[4] *The Dabistan*, 234.

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Mir who died at Lahore in 1633.[1] The Gwalior fort was the gaol reserved only for political prisoners of high status. Even rebel princes of the royal family were also kept there in confinement. All the prisoners were at liberty to keep their wives and families with them in the fort and they had to observe the same rules and regulations as the prisoners It appears that the Guru lived there with his three wives. The Guru was arrested early in 1609 and was released in October 1620, along with Dharam Chand, the Raja of Hindur (Nalagarh). He arrived at Amritsar on the Diwali day.

In 1620 Jahangir invited Mian Mir to Agra. The Emperor was highly impressed with the saint. He tried to please the saint in every way, and showed him his highest regard and respect.

It seems probable, that on this occasion Guru Hargobind was released from Gwalior gaol on Mian Mir's recommendation. On his return journey Agra fell on Guru's way. He might have called on the Emperor to thank him. Perhaps Mian Mir might be still at Agra and that Hargobind and Mian Mir travelled together from Agra to Lahore.

The Guru waits on the Emperor

In 1621 Jahangir left for Kashmir on his second visit to the Valley. Guru Hargobind met the Emperor on the bank of the Beas. The Emperor was pleased with this young man of parts, who was in full bloom of youth at the age of twentyfive and persuaded him to accompany him to Kashmir.[2]

Accompanies the Emperor to Kashmir

The road to Kashmir bifurcated at Gujrat. The royal camp halted here for sometime. Guru Hargobind met Shah Daulah, the celebrated local saint. He was ill at ease on seeing the Guru living in splendour. Shah Daulah observed that a religious precept was expected to be a self-denying person. He enquired why the Guru had a large family and why he possessed so much wealth and so many horses. The Guru replied:

"*Aurat imān hai, aulād nishān hai, zar guzrān hai, ghoṛā shān hai.*"[3]

[1]M.Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 309. The saint was visited by Shah Jahan and Dara Shikoh.

[2]Macauliffe, IV 31-35.

[3]Account kindly supplied by Akali Mool Singh Cheema of Gurdaspur. Cf. Macauliffe, IV, 64.

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[Wife keeps one faithful, children are lineal descendants, money is necessary for living, horses stand for status.]

According to Trilochan Singh, Goswami Ram Das, Guru of Shivaji, met Guru Hargobind in Kashmir. The Goswami asked the Guru: "I hear that you are the successor of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak had renounced the world; while you wear the sword, keep horses and an army and people call you 'The True King'. What kind of a Sadhu are you?" Hargobind replied· "Saintliness is within. Sovereignty is without. (*Bātan faqiri, Zâhir amiri*) The swords are to protect the poor, and destroy the tyrant. Baba Nanak had not renounced the world. He had renounced *māyā* (mammon)." Ram Das was pleased, and he later trained Shivaji in the same manner.[1]

Invested with supervisory powers

After his return from Kashmir, we find Hargobind playing the role of a friendly collaborator of Jahangir. Mohsin Fani says: "Hargobind never separated himself from the stirrup of victorious Jahangir."[2] It is surmised that the Guru was invested with some sort of supervisory powers by the Emperor over the Panjab affairs, and was given command of a Mughal contingent consisting of 700 horse, 1,000 foot and seven guns.[3] In addition to this, Hargobind's personal contingent swelled considerably. Pathan mercenaries from the north-west under their leader Paindah Khan joined the Guru's banner in large numbers. There seems to be no doubt that Jahangir would have conferred upon Hargobind a high *mansabdari* rank, which the Guru could not accept owing to his position as the religious leader of a great community.

The Guru at the head of Mughal contingent as well as his own moved about all over Eastern Panjab. His duty was to suppress agitation or revolt in any part of this region. It was an honorary job. The Guru was not in regular service of the Mughal government. He accepted this job to raise the prestige of the Sikhs in the eyes of government officials and general public, to get his own men trained as military men, and to secure the person of Chandu Shah for punishment.

Conflict at Sri Hargobindpur, 1621

Guru Hargobind decided to develop Sri Hargobindpur which had

[1] *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 36-37; Gobind Singh Mansukhani and Dharamjit Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 27.

[2] *The Dabistan*, 234.

[3] Bhai Parmanand, *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, 300-301.

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been founded by his father Guru Arjan in 1595, in memory of Hargobind's birth in that year, the child being his only son, born after many prayers. There some barren land was claimed by Bhagwan Das Khatri, a money-lender who, out of hatred, was called Kirâr, meaning a contemptible money-lender. The Guru planned to erect some buildings there. Bhagwan Das offered tough opposition. At the head of a number of ruffians he attacked the Guru's camp. In the fight Bhagwan Das was killed. His son Ratan Chand and Chandu Shah's son Karam Chand made a common cause of grievance. They approached the faujdar of Jalandhar He despatched a contingent of troops. The Guru checked its progress at Rahila Ghat on river Beas and put it to flight.[1]

Foundation of Kiratpur, 23 April, 1624

The Guru had not forgotten that in spite of his basking in the royal sun he was beset with enemies on all sides. He thought he should find a safe retreat in the hills in an emergency. He deputed his eldest son Gurditta to Dharam Chand, Raja of Hindur (Nalagarh) in 1624. The Raja gave him a warm reception. He offered Gurditta to choose a suitable place anywhere in his territory. Gurditta did not like a site in the impenetrable hills. He wished to be near the plains but far away from the highway connecting Delhi and Lahore. He selected an area at the foot of the Shivalik hills commanding full view of Naina Devi temple. It belonged to Kahlur or Bilaspur State. Raja Kalyan Chand gladly offered the land as a free gift on April 23, 1624. Gurditta built a few houses and a gurdwara there. In the gurdwara kirtan or recitation from the holy Granth was regularly carried on in the morning and evening. The people called the place Kirtanpur now known as Kiratpur.[2]

Secures Chandu's person

Hargobind was determined to punish his enemies, in particular Chandu Shah. He took advantage of another visit of Jahangir to Panjab "During the Emperor's residence at Lahore, Hargobind was admitted to an audience. He presented a rosary of amber to his majesty, who was highly pleased with its splendour, and asked the Guru whether he could procure more pearls of the same kind as were

[1]Fauja Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 12.

[2]Bhat Vahi Multani Sindhi, quoted by Fauja Singh in his *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 21, fn 9.

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contained in the rosary. The Guru submitted to his majesty that the rosary consisted of a complete set of a hundred and eight pearls, but Chandu, his dewan, had taken most of them, and the ornament was therefore incomplete. The Emperor asked the Guru how the pearls had fallen into the hands of the dewan. Upon this the Guru burst into tears and narrated to the king the whole story. The king was greatly enraged at hearing of the treatment which Arjan had met with at the hands of the dewan, and orders were issued for the person of Chandu Shah to be handed over to Hargovind to avenge himself on him in any manner he chose for his father's death." Having secured the person of Chandu Shah, "Hargovind took him to Amritsar, and there had him dragged through the streets with a rope round his feet, and made to sit on heated frying pans and hot sand, as he had done with Arjan. Thus he died in the most excruciating pain."[1]

On seeing the fate of Chandu Shah and Guru Hargobind's influence with Emperor Jahangir, Prithi Mal's son Meharban who called himself the seventh Guru was terrified. He did not like to stay at Amritsar any longer. He settled down in the uninhabited deserted area in Firozpur district. The place was named Guru Har Sahae, meaning that God was the helper of the Guru. It is situated 43 kms to the south-west of Firozpur city. Their descendants still live there and are well known as Sodhi gurus.

The War

Succession of Shah Jahan

Jahangir fell seriously ill in 1627. He went to Kashmir for a change of climate. His condition deteriorated. While returning the Emperor died at Rajauri on November 7, 1627. Nur Jahan and her brother Asaf Khan were with him. At Lahore Nur Jahan declared her son-in-law and son of Jahangir, Shahryar, emperor of India. Asaf Khan was interested in his own son-in-law, Shah Jahan, another son of Jahangir. He was in the Deccan. Asaf Khan sent most trusted runner, Banarsi, to Shah Jahan, calling him immediately to the north, meanwhile Asaf Khan defeated Shahryar. Shah Jahan ascended the throne on February 24, 1628. He started his reign with the execution of all his brothers and nephews. Though born to a Hindu mother, he became an orthodox Muslim.

[1]Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Panjab*, 255 & fn.

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In 1632, he was returning from Kashmir. He found that some Hindus of Rajauri, Bhimbar and Gujarat accepted Muslim girls as wives and converted them to their own faith. The Emperor stopped such marriages and Muslim women already married were seized from their husbands who were fined, and in certain cases they were executed. They could retain their wives only on their embracing Islam. As many as 4,500 such women were recovered. In 1635 it was reported to the Emperor that a Muslim girl Zinab had been converted, given the new name of Ganga and was taken as a wife by Dalpat, a Hindu of Sarhind. The woman, along with her seven children, one son and six daughters, was taken away and the man was executed.[1] Kaulan, a daughter of Rustam Khan, the Qazi of Lahore, and a disciple of Mian Mir, had also run away from home at the age of seventeen, became a Sikh and took shelter with Guru Hargobind, who immortalised her by constructing a new tank at Amritsar named after her, Kaulsar.

Three temples were demolished in Panjab and, mosques were built in their places. The *baoli* of Guru Arjan, built in memory of his father, was filled up with rubbish and the *langar* building attached to it was converted into a mosque.[2]

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The Guru's Battles

The Sikh Gurus alone had provided leadership to the down-trodden Hindus of Panjab. Such men as had suffered from having converted wives looked up to Hargobind for guidance and support, and he was not the man to shirk his duty and responsibility. The Guru was involved in a number of engagements with the imperial troops. He had to change his headquarters from Amritsar first to Chubbal, then to Sri Hargobindpur, later to Kartarpur in Jalandhar district, again to Phagwara and finally to Kiratpur.

The scuffle near Jallo, 1628

Mohsin Fani says Guru Hargobind offered allegiance to the new monarch and made friends with Yar Khan, the *faujdar* "in the neighbourhood of Panjab."[3] Yet he was soon involved in a conflict

[1]Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Badshah Namah*, II, 57-58; Muhammad Salih, *Amal-e-Salih*, II, 64; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, I, 510.

[2]Kahan Singh, *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature*, 2573; Tilcchan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 46.

[3]*The Dabistan*, 234.

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One day it so happened that Shah Jahan was hunting in the jungles of Jallo lying between Lahore and Amritsar. By chance, Hargobind was also hunting there. According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "The Guru entered the same arena in pursuit of the game, and his Sikhs quarrelled with servants of the imperial hunt about a bird. The two parties came to blows, and in the end the imperialists were beaten off with slaughter."[1] The Guru would have returned the royal hawk had not the imperial party threatened the Guru and his Sikhs with dire consequences.

The battle of Sangrana, 1628

Shah Jahan retaliated by demolishing the building of the Sikh langar and filling up the Sikh baoli in Chuna Mandi, Lahore, with its debris. Being in a hurry to return to Delhi, he instructed the newly appointed Panjab viceroy, Hakim Alim-ud-din, known by his title of Wazir Khan, to chastise the Guru. Wazir Khan was a native of Chiniot. He held liberal views and was favourably inclined towards the Guru and took no action. He was transferred to Agra in 1633.[2]

The battle of Amritsar, 14 April, 1634

About this time the Guru was to celebrate the marriage of his only daughter Viro, with Sadhu of Malleh village. Enormous quantities of sweets were prepared on this occasion. Just then a Mughal force attacked him. After a sharp scuffle the Guru retired to Chubhal, 25 kilometres south-west of Amritsar, where he performed the nuptial ceremony in haste on the fixed day of the marriage and prepared his Sikhs for the attack on the Mughals. The Mughals fell on the sweets like a bird of prey. When they were surfeited Guru Hargobind suddenly delivered an attack on them, killing many including their commander. Macauliffe says that in this battle seven hundred Sikhs defeated an army of seven thousands.[3]

Syed Muhammad Latif writes: "Mukhlis Khan marched from Lahore at the head of 7,000 troops, who were, however, signally defeated near Amritsar, their leader being killed in the engagement. The defeated army returned to Lahore after losing many in killed and wounded. This was the first combat in the annals of the Panjab which

[1]Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *A Short History of Aurangzib*, 156.
[2]Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 42, 46, 51.
[3]Macauliffe, IV, 96.

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was fought between the Mahomedans and the Sikhs."[1] The Guru's fame spread far and wide. Sir Jadunath writes: "Many men came to enlist under the Guru's banner. They said that no one else had power to contend with the Emperor."[2]

The battles of Lahra and Gurusar, December, 1634

After a few months Hargobind was again involved into trouble with the Lahore Governor. One of the Guru's devoted Sikhs, Sadh[3] or Sadah or Sadhu was ordered to bring horses for the Guru from Central Asia. Mohsin Fani says he had not gone far away from Amritsar when he was informed that his little son who was deeply attached to his father, had seriously fallen ill, and he was asked to return. Such was his devotion to the Guru that he replied: "If he should die, there is enough wood in the house to burn him. I am going on Guru's business and I will not return." His son passed away, but he did not come back.[4]

Sadh first went to Balkh. On finding that the quality of horses he wanted to buy not being available there, he came to Iraq. There he purchased three horses of the finest breed. On his return journey he was accompanied by Mohsin Fani from Kabul to Lahore. He writes: "Sadh is a man, happy at good luck but never sad in misfortune". At Lahore Sadh's two horses, Dilbagh and Gulbagh, were seized by Khalil Beg, the Governor. Another devoted Sikh was Bidhichand. Mohsin Fani says: "In the beginning Bidhia was a thief."[5] Whenever the Guru wanted to punish some miscreant, he deputed Bidhia to do so. The Guru told him that "on doomsday his disciples would not be asked to give an explanation for their deeds."[6] Bidhichand was sent to recover the two horses. In disguise he took up service in the Lahore fort first as a groom and afterwards as a tracker. In course of time he managed to escape with both the horses one by one. They

[1] Latif, *Panjab*, 256.

[2] *A Short History of Aurangzib*. 156.

[3] A person named Sadhu was married to the Guru's daughter, Viro. He was a great devotee of the Guru. Sadhu said : "The slave Sadhu hath seen the Guru washed his feet and drunk the nectrous water therefrom." [Macauliffe, IV, 94] Perhaps this Sadhu was different from Sadh. Macauliffe, IV, 147-50 refers to another Sadh or Sadhu.

[4] *The Dabistan*, 239,

[5] ibid.

[6] *The Dabistan*, 239.

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were renamed by the Guru Janbhai and Suhela.[1]

The Guru recruited a Pathan brigand Paindah Khan on five rupees a day. Paindah Khan's mother had been Hargobind's wet nurse, and her son was a playmate and bosom friend of Hargobind. The Guru treated him with great kindness and consideration. He was given a house and a buffalo for milk.[2] He was a brave soldier. Hargobind was conscious of the mighty power of the Mughal empire and his own meagre resources. Expecting reprisal the Guru took shelter in the Lakhi Jungle lying between Firozpur and Bhatinda. As anticipated a strong contingent of the Governor of Lahore pursued the Guru into the impenetrable retreat. "Kamar Beg and Lal Beg were sent out from Lahore at the head of an army which crossed the Sutlej; but want of provisions and the difficulties of the march had a disastrous effect on the imperial troops."[3] The Guru went on receding before the imperial troops. He arrived at the heart of the waterless country of Brar Jats, a warlike people. They were sympathetic to the Sikhs on account of Guru Amar Das's manji system. The Sikhs lay in ambush and defeated the enemy, but at a heavy cost of 1,200 Sikh soldiers. This engagement took place near Lahara Gaga about 100 kms from Bhatinda on December 16, 1634. The Guru turned towards north pursued by the Mughals Another action was fought. At the place of battle the Guru built a tank now called Gurusar. It is situated near Nathana, a village five kilometres distant from Rampura Phul railway station.[4] Mohsin Fani says that "Khalil Beg's high-handedness did not bring him prosperity. The same year his son who was responsible for this act died, and he himself suffered insults and disgrace."[5]

The battle of Kartarpur, 26 April, 1635

The Guru returned to Kartarpur near Jalandhar founded by Guru Arjan.[6] Differences arose between Hargobind and Paindah Khan. He deserted the Guru and sought service with the Governor of Lahore. An expedition in command of Mir Badehra and Paindah Khan was dispatched against the Guru. They were joined by the Jalandhar

[1]Macauliffe, IV, 178.
[2]Macauliffe, IV, 52.
[3]Latif. *Panjab*, 256.
[4]Macauliffe, IV, 187.
[5]*The Dabistan*, 239.
[6]ibid.

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troops. The Guru had only 5,000 soldiers with him.[1] In a hard fought battle both the enemy commanders were killed.[2] In this battle the Guru's youngest son Tyag Mal displayed remarkable skill and won the title of Tegh Bahadur from his father.

Kale Khan assumed command of the Mughal forces and continued to fight. To avenge the death of his leaders he rushed upon the Guru with a drawn sword, and delivered a vehement attack on him. The Guru warded off the blow and then assaulted him saying: "Not so but the sword is used thus." In one stroke Kale Khan's head flew off. At this Mohsin Fani remarks that Guru Hargobind did not strike in anger but deliberately and to give instruction, because the function of the Guru was to teach.[3] In this battle the Guru's beloved steed, Dilbagh renamed Janbhai, was severely wounded, and it died soon afterwards at Kiratpur.[4]

Hargobind felt very sad at the death of his old brave soldier. "The Guru, on seeing Painda Khan's dead body, was filled with pity and regret. He took his shield, and put it over his victim's face so as to shade it from the sun, and bursting into tears, said, 'Painda Khan, I cherished thee, I reared thee, and I made thee a hero. Though men spoke ill of thee, I forgot thy failings, and evil to thee never entered my mind; but evil destiny so misled thee that thou broughtest an army against me. It is thine own acts of ingratitude and insolence that have led to thy death at my hands. . . . Though thou hast been ungrateful and untrue to thy salt, I pray the Almighty to grant thee dwelling in heaven."[5]

6. The battle of Phagwara, 29 April, 1635

The Guru had suffered heavy losses in men and material. He expected another attack from the enemy. He hurriedly retired from Kartarpur in order to reach Kiratpur via Phagwara. The Mughal troops reorganised themselves and pursued the Guru. It was almost a running battle. At Phagwara another pitched battle was fought three days later on 29 April, 1635. It was a drawn battle.[6] The Guru rushed towards the Rupar ferry to cross River Satluj. The Mughal soldiers

[1] M'Gregor. *History of Sikhs*, 1. 59.
[2] *The Dabistan*, 235.
[3] ibid.
[4] Macauliffe, IV, 214.
[5] ibid, 209.
[6] Fauja Singh, op. cit., 15.

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gave up the pursuit. Kiratpur was situated in the territory of Raja Tara Chand of Kahlur who had thrown off allegiance to Emperor Shah Jahan.

Mohsin Fani concludes "Many strong forces (*basā lashkar-e-girān sang*) had been sent against him. By God's grace he escaped unhurt (*sālam birun raft*), though whatever he had was lost."[1]

Comment

The Guru's battles were not of aggressive nature. They were of defensive character. With his slender resources he could not maintain a constant struggle against the government. He did not want any territory to carve out a state for himself, nor did he refuse to accept the Mughal authority. His only object was to express his resentment against the wrong religious policy o. the rulers. In achieving this objective he was successful.

As Guru's battles did not find a mention in any Persian work on Shah Jahan, it appears they were local engagements between the Guru and provincial governors or deputy governors or district officers. The Guru was not a rebel against Mughal government. His battles produced no effect on the policy of Lahore and Delhi. It was for this reason that the Guru was allowed to live in peace at Kiratpur for many years. It was not a Sikh-Mughal conflict. The conflicts arose over a hawk, two Iraqi horses, a deserter associate and over the Qazi's daughter who was a refugee with the Guru. Shah Jahan's eldest son, Dara Shikoh, was a believer in holy men, both Hindu and Muslim. Under his instructions no more notice was taken of Guru's past activities. Macauliffe says the Emperor "decided that it was not good to engage in further warfare with priests and faqirs and that it would be well to forget the past."[2]

The Guru's work at Kiratpur, 1635-1644

Guru Hargobind spent the last nine years of his life at Kiratpur attending *kirtans* and in looking after the *sangats*. The preaching work had fallen almost entirely into the hands of *masands*. Their office had become hereditary. The Guru left them undisturbed, as they supplied him with men, money and material for his battles. Many Hindus and Musalmans of the neighbourhood were becoming his Sikhs. Baba Sri-

[1] *The Dabistan*, 235.
[2] *The Sikh Religion*, IV, 96.

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chand, the founder of the Udasi sect, died in 1629. Before his death he had "bestowed his mitre and necklace on Baba Gurditta, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind, who was then laying out building plan at Kiratpur. The words of Srichand addressed to Guru Hargobind at the time of adoption were:

"The Guruship was already with you. I had only the faqir's mitre, and now that too is given over to your family."[1]

Thus the danger of schism was over for good. It greatly strengthened Sikhism. After this Guru Hargobind sent the Udasis into the hills to spread Sikhism. The Muslim Gujars and others became Sikhs. Mohsin Fani says that "in those hills up to the borders of Tibet and Khotan the name of Musalman had disappeared."[2] The same author further writes that the ambassadors of the hill rajas waited upon Hargobind, and they did not know even the name of Shah Jahan though Delhi was known to them.[3]

The Guru exercised great influence over the hill rajas. The author of *The Dabistan* who stayed with the Guru at Kiratpur for a long time relates an incident concerning the goddess Naina Devi[4] not far from Kiratpur. It was worshipped by the Rajas and other people of the neighbourhood. When Guru Hargobind arrived at Kiratpur, one of his disciples named Bhairo went to the temple and broke the nose of the goddess. This was reported to the neighbouring Rajas who complained to the Guru. He summoned Bhairo who denied the charge. The servants of the Rajas asserted that they recognised him. Bhairo replied: "O Rajas! ask the goddess. If I am named, you may kill me." The Rajas said: "O fool! how can the goddess speak?" Bhairo laughed and said: "Have you discovered who is a fool? If your goddess cannot stop breaking its own head, nor does she name the culprit, what good can you expect from her worship?" The Rajas kept quiet, and most of the people of the area became Guru's disciples.[5]

Even wealthy disciples of the Guru offered him implicit obedience. Mohsin Fani writes that one of the Guru's disciples was Jhanda. He was a rich man. He spoke little and never said anything about anyone either good or bad. One day he injured his foot. The Guru advised

[1]Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, V, 27; Teja Singh, *Sikhism*, 71.
[2]Khazan Singh, 133; *Dabistan*, 235.
[3]ibid.
[4]Trilochan Singh wrongly calls it Taradevi which is situated near Simla. *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 82.
[5]ibid, 235.

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him not to wear shoes. Jhanda remained barefoot for three months though his foot had recovered soon after. On hearing this Hargobind said that he did not mean he should always remain without shoes, but only as long as his foot had not healed. Thereupon Jhanda resumed his shoes. On another occasion the Guru asked his Sikhs to fetch wood for the *langar*. Jhanda did not come to see the Guru until noon on the third day. The Guru sent his Sikhs to inquire about him. They found him coming from the jungle with a bundle of firewood on his back. Hargobind remonstrated with him for having undertaken such a menial job. He replied that the Guru had asked his Sikhs to fetch fuelwood. He was a Sikh and therefore obeyed his order. One day the Guru went to a garden with Jhanda. Somebody came to talk to the Guru in private. The Guru asked Jhanda to stay there. He and the visitor strolled for a while and then came out by another gate and went home. Jhanda stayed in the garden for three days, and would not leave the place without the permission of the Guru. On learning this Hargobind called him.[1]

Hargobind's Death, 1644

Mohsin Fani was present at the time of Guru Hargobind's death at Kiratpur. He writes:

"On hearing the virtues of the Guru, an angel of God came from seventh heaven to see him. The Guru recognised him and treated him with ceremonial reverence. The angel then left him. One week was not yet over when on Sunday, 3 March, 1644 he departed this life at the age of forty-nine."[2]

On seeing the angel the Guru realized that his end was near, and he must nominate his successor. His eldest son Gurditta had died in 1638, leaving behind two sons, Dhir Mal was the elder and Har Rae was the younger. Guru Hargobind's two living sons were Suraj Mal and Tegh Bahadur. The former was fond of worldly pleasures and the latter was a recluse. According to the previous practice it was the privilege of the living Guru to select his successor, and he had to choose one from his progeny. Dhir Mal considered that it was his right to succeed. The Guru did not consider him a suitable candidate. He nominated his younger brother Har Rae who was 14 years old. Dhir Mal felt infuriated. In the evening meal he administered poison

[1] *The Dabistan*, 238.
[2] ibid, 237.

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to the Guru, and immediately disappeared to Kartarpur with the original copy of the *Adi Granth*.[1] Mohsin Fani does not say that the Guru was poisoned to death. There must be two reasons for it. The cause of death must have been kept a dead secret for the simple reason that the Mughal army was about to invade the hills. Secondly, being on very cordial terms with the Guru he did not think it proper to record it. The second factor seems to be more plausible, as the disappearance of Dhir Mal could not remain hidden.

Mohsin Fani attended the funeral of the Guru. He writes: "When his body was placed on pyre, set fire to it and the flames rose high up, Raja Ram Rajput, his servant, leapt into the fire, walked a few paces in the flames, and on reaching the Guru's feet, put his forehead at the soles of his feet, remained motionless and expired. After him a Jat's son who was in the service of the Guru's son-in-law, threw himself into the fire. Then a large crowd intended to jump, but they were prevented by Guru Har Rae."[2] Mohsin Fani quotes a quatrain of Daulat Khan Qaqshal, the last line of which is:

"Jan dādan wa dil burdan in har do Khuda dād ast."

[To sacrifice one's life and to carry off somebody's heart, these two are God-given gifts.]

Guru Hargobind's *samadhi* was built at his place.

Evaluation of Guru Hargobind's work

1. Guru Hargobind's activities were not appreciated and properly understood by the upper class Hindus. It was hinted that he had fallen short of the lofty ideals of his predecessors in matters religious and spiritual. He was dubbed as one who had been lured by the glamour of arms and love of politics. They complained that he was occasionally cooperating with the enemies of their faith. Most of the Hindus considered it beneath the dignity of a religious precept to indulge in hunting and sport and destroy life. His encouragement of meat diet and travels in Muslim countries deeply offended caste-ridden orthodox Hindus.

2. The Sikhs pointed out that he had composed and added no verse to the Holy *Granth*. They grumbled that the Guru did not stay

[1]Ramjas Diwan, *Tarikh Khandan Ahluwalian, Wali-e-Kapurthala*, 57; *Durga Das Joshi, Sri Maharaj Jassa Singh Sahib Bahadur ke Mashhur Karname aur Panth Khalsa Ka' Uruj*, 40.

[2]*The Dabistan*, 237.

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continually at Amritsar and led a roving life. A Sikh asked Guru Hargobind, "When you are away, whom should we look upon as the Guru?" The Guru replied: "Any Sikh who calls at your house, may be considered as the Guru."[1]

3. As the people of Panjab could not think of any opposition to the mighty Mughals, they considered Guru's warlike acts as wasteful and useless. They said that in spite of his so-called victories the Guru was driven from pillar to post and eventually forced to seek refuge in the hilly region at Kiratpur.

4. Even Bhai Gurdas, the scribe of the *Adi Granth* and the most trustworthy disciple of Guru Hargobind expressed the same views of other people about his activities. He composed a Var which says:

Dharamsāl kar bahida
Ikkat thāon na tike tikāya
Pādshāh ghar āonde
Gaṛh chaṛhyā Pādshāh chaṛhāyā
Ummat mahal na pāodi
Naththā phire na dare darāyā
Manji bah santokh da
Kutte rakh shikār khilāyā
Bāni kar sun gāwadā
Kathe na sune na gāo sunāyā
Sewak pās na rakhen
Dokhi dusht āgo mohe lāyā
Sach na luke lukāya
Charan kanwal Sikh bhor lubhāyā
Ajar jare
Na āp janāya[2]

[Formerly the Gurus used to sit in the temple. The present Guru did not stay at one place. Emperors called at the residence of former Gurus. The present Guru was shut up in a fort by the Emperor. Formerly the disciples could not find room in the over-crowded congregations. The present Guru led a roving life fearing nobody. Former Gurus by sitting on a cot gave consolation. The present Guru kept dogs and hunted. The former Gurus would compose hymns, would listen to them and would sing. The present Guru neither composes, nor listens, nor sings. He does not keep Sikhs with him, but he has wicked

[1]ibid. 239.
[2]Bhai Gurdas, *Var 26*, Pauri 24.

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and bad people as his guides. The truth cannot be concealed. The Sikhs are enamoured of his lotus-feet like bees. He supports an intolerable burden, but he does not boast of it.]

Conclusion

1. The fact that the Guru was trying to change the ages-long mentality of Hindus of offering only passive resistance to the oppressor was blindly ignored. He knew that the Muslim sword had completely wiped out the remains of Buddhism from the land of its birth. Hinduism had survived because a section of it, called Rajputs, had put up a tough fight against the foreigners. In Panjab the spirit of resistance had been completely broken. After six hundred years of slavery he was awakening his fellow countrymen to the realisation that irrespective of consequences, which were quite obvious, the people should rise against a cruel Government to get their wrongs redressed.

2. His acceptance of the high office under Jahangir and Shah Jahan was a fine stroke of diplomacy and political sagacity. It disarmed suspicion of the local government and afforded him an excellent opportunity to augment his military resources.

3 The organisational evolution of Sikhism from the standpoint of religion and spiritualism had almost been completed during the time of Guru Arjan. The execution of Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind's own imprisonment had clearly shown that a hard lot was in store for the new religion. Guru Hargobind had a clear conception of the changing circumstances and had realised the necessity of playing an active role in the political life of the community.

4. He had a clear conception that militarily he had little chance of success against almost the unlimited resources of the Mughal empire. Yet he considered it below his dignity to adopt a submissive role, which was nothing short of degradation.

5. He certainly inaugurated a policy which was to lead the most down trodden people slowly but assuredly to political and military advancement. The Guru created a revolution in the life of the Sikhs. Along with recitation of hymns they were taught the practical lesson of *dharam yudha* or holy war. This factor his critics could not see or comprehend. The Guru thus remained much misunderstood and his work was misrepresented. In reality Guru Hargobind rendered a unique service to this country in showing the true path of deliverance from political bondage.

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6. After all what is the use of such spirituality as would not inspire a person to resist the wrong with courage and boldness? Was it not a marvel that the Guru had made himself master of the minds of his disciples? Jhanda, a wealthy landlord, could go barefoot for three months at the bidding of the Guru.[1] Sadh had declined to see his dying son while going to Central Asia to buy horses for the Guru.[2] Bidhichand could serve as a groom and again as a tracker to recover Guru's horses seized by the Governor of Lahore from Sadh, at a great risk to his own life.[3] Many of the Sikhs were ready to burn themselves on the pyre of the Guru while two young men actually sacrificed their lives at the feet of the Guru. Mohsin Fani says: "The Sikhs believe that all the disciples of the Guru go to heaven."[4]

7. Besides, Guru Hargobind did not entirely neglect preaching and propagation of Sikh religion. If he engaged himself in some more useful activities, he employed certain other means to see that the Sikh religion embraced a wider field. For this purpose he utilized the services of the Udasi sect founded by Guru Nanak's son Baba Srichand. The Udasis adhered to celibacy and asceticism. With this exception their principles seemed to be in agreement with the tenets of Sikhism. The Udasis who were not hampered by any family ties were employed by the Guru in spreading Sikh religion in hilly regions difficult of access, and who wiped out the very name of Musalman from that area. The system of *masands* and *sangats* was strengthened by the addition of a number of *Dhuâns* (hearths) and *Bakhshish* (bounties). In these institutions Udasis rendered great service to the cause of Sikhism.

8. Hargobind was the first Guru to have resorted to arms in order to redress the grievances of the community. The constitutional agitation was meaningless as there was no constitution. He made it clear to everybody that fighting against the wrongs was not against the spirit of any religion but it was an essential ingredient of a practical religion, and that hunting and sport were not opposed to religious piety. The Guru had fully justified his wearing of two swords, representing *miri* and *piri*. He combined in himself the spiritual and military leadership. The political aspect of it was left out as the time was not opportune.

[1] *The Dabistan*, 238.
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid.
[4] ibid, 239.

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Pacifism of VII and VIII Gurus, 1644-1664

Guru Har Rae, 1644-1661

Of Guru Hargobind's five sons, two had survived him. The elder Suraj Mal was a worldly man and the youngest Tegh Bahadur was a recluse. The Guru's deceased eldest son Gurditta had two sons, Dhir Mal and Har Rae. The former being the murderer of the Guru, the latter, a lad of fourteen years, born at Kiratpur on January 30, 1630, was chosen as his successor. He was strongly advised to retain the existing contingent of 2,200 mounted soldiers as his body-guard.[1]

The material about the pontificate of Guru Har Rae is scanty. Mohsin Fani, who had been so helpful to us for the period of Guru Hargobind, asserts that he was a great friend of Guru Har Rae, but he does not tell us much about him. The reason is that he had ended his book in 1645 when Guru Har Rae left for Nahan, and the two do not seem to have met each other afterwards. Mohsin Fani returned to his home in Kashmir and spent the rest of his life there. He writes: "Har Rae spent one year at Kiratpur. In 1645 Najabat Khan, son of Shahrukh Mirza, led an expedition under orders of Shah Jahan, conquered the country of Tara Chand and took the Raja prisoner. Guru Har Rae retired to Nahan in the country of Raja Karam Prakash not far from Sarhind."[2]

Guru Har Rae retired to Nahan for the following reasons: 1. The Mughal army was carrying on a campaign against Raja Tara Chand of Kahlur and Kiratpur was near this place.

2. His elder brother, Dhir Mal, had set himself up as the seventh Guru at Kartarpur, and he was a deadly enemy of the Guru. The Guru's mother did not wish to risk his son's life, and preferred to live far away from him in safety.

3. Prithi Mal's son Meharban had taken possession of Hari Mandar and had declared himself the seventh Guru.

[1]Kanhiya Lal, 34.

[2]*The Dabistan*, 238. In Shikasta Persian with a slight change of dots and curves Nahan was written by the scribe as Thapal. Thapal is no place in the territory of Raja Karam Prakash. It is undoubtedly Nahan. capital of Sirmaur State. Several writers have accepted it as Thapal. Vide Indubhushan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, II, 48; Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, I, 45; Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 95 Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, 55, fn. 1 read it as Taksal or Tangral near Kasauli. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, I, 6 agrees with Cunningham.

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Guru Har Rae lived at Nahan for twelve years, though he often visited Kiratpur. He devoted all his energy to consolidate the Sikh religion, and went frequently on short tours to inspire the Sikhs by personal contact. At Nathana he blessed a poor and hungry Jat boy, Phul, who became the founder of the famous Phulkian family comprising the erstwhile states of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot and others.

Prince Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan, was in the habit of visiting saints both Hindu and Muslim. He met Guru Har Rae though he was fifteen years younger than the Prince. Dara was noted for his liberal views and was popular with Hindus. "The Punjab was strongly attached to Dara", writes Sir Jadunath. "The province had long been his viceroyalty."[1] Shah Jahan fell ill in September, 1657, and civil war was imminent among his sons. Dara seems to have called upon his friends and supporters to get ready for his help. This brought Har Rae back to Kiratpur in the winter of 1657. In the war fought in April, May, 1658-Dara was defeated by Aurangzeb. Dara fled to Agra and then to Delhi. He crossed the Satluj at Rupar where Har Rae joined him at the head of of 2,000 troops. The Prince and the Guru reached Lahore on July 3, 1658. Dara spent a month and a half in making preparations for war. "But Dara was utterly broken down in body and spirit."[2] "He despaired of success, and his despair infected his troops"[3] Finding the Prince in an indecisive mood and Aurangzeb in hot pursuit of him, first Raja Rajrup of Nurpur (1646-61) left Dara on the pretext of bringing reinforcements. Har Rae followed suit afterwards.[4]

After having firmly established himself on the throne, Aurangzeb summoned Guru Har Rae to his court. The Guru sent his 14-year-old eldest son Ram Rae in September, 1661. He was instructed to concentrate on God and reply to the Emperor patiently and carefully. He was reminded of Guru Arjan's conduct when Jahangir ordered him to modify hymns in the holy Granth. He was warned to avoid flattery and behave with dignity. The lad being over-zealous and ambitious, and perhaps out of fear for his life, tried to win over the Emperor and his courtiers. He was asked to explain why the following verse in the holy Granth abused the Musalmans: "*Matti Musalmān ki peṛe pai kumhār; Ghāṛ bhānde ittān kiān jalti kare pukār*". [The dust of a

[1] *A Short History of Aurangzib*, 72.
[2] ibid, 68.
[3] ibid, 72.
[4] *Khulasat-ut-Twarikh*, 513.

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Musalman is kneaded by a potter into a dough, and he converts it into pots and bricks, which cry out as they burn.] The hymn was uttered by Guru Nanak to show that cremation and burial differed little. Ram Rae was overawed by the splendour of the court. In order not to offend the Emperor, Ram Rae just in his early teens, replied that Nanak's actual word was '*Beimān*' or faithless, and not Musalman which appeared in the text by the mistake of the scribe. He had forgotten that he being the Guru's son and a probable candidate for next guruship and employed on such a delicate mission had upon him a tremendously heavy duty and that he should be ready for death. His answer naturally pleased the Emperor but offended the Sikhs of Delhi who reported the matter to the Guru at Kiratpur.

Guru Har Rae was deeply distressed at his son's behaviour for having insulted Guru Nanak and the *Granth Sahib*. The Guru declared Ram Rae unfit for guruship and immediately excluded him from succession. Har Rae observed : "The guruship is like a tiger's milk which can only be contained in a golden cup. Only he who is ready to devote his life thereto is worthy of it. Let Ram Rae not look on my face again.."[1] His decision was conveyed to Ram Rae as well as to the Sikhs at Delhi.[2] Ram Rae was detained at the Mughal court where he conducted himself as a faithful courtier. Shortly afterwards Guru Har Rae died at Kiratpur on October 6, 1661 at the young age of 32.

Guru Har Rae converted a Sikh named Bhagat Bhagwan, a Panjabi trader in Bihar. He established numerous centres of Sikh religion all over in Bihar. His gurbhais were Badri Das, Narain Das, Puroji and Ram Sahae. Their important followers were Bakht Mal, Daryai, Durga Das, Jagat Ram, Sangat Das, Shyam Sagar and Tulsi Das. According to Inderjit Prasad Singh, there were 360 Sikh *maths* in Bihar in the time of Guru Har Rae. A large number of Panjabi Khatri traders carried on business in Bihar. They lent great help in the establishment of Sikh centres. Jaita Seth, Bhanu Bahal of Rajmahal, Badli Sodhi and Seth Gopal were great supporters of Sikhism in Bihar.[3]

Comment

Aurangzeb had not taken a serious view of Guru Har Rae's military

[1]Indarajit Prasad Singh, *The Sikh Review*, March, 1978, pp. 62-63.

[2]Macauliffe, IV, 310.

[3]Trilochan Singh holds that "the Emperor was favourably inclined towards Sikh movement upto this period". *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 100-101.

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assistance of Dara. Out of 2,200 soldiers in the service of the Guru less than 2,000 accompanied Har Rae to Lahore, and there also they did not participate in any action. Aurangzeb, therefore, ignored the political aspect, and concentrated on the religious aspect. Instead of asking Ram Rae why his father had joined Dara, the Emperor demanded an explanation why the Musalmans had been abused by Guru Nanak in a particular hymn. The stern nature of the Emperor, the awful atmosphere of the court and his own loneliness, frightened Ram Rae, a lad of 14. Out of fear he substituted the word *Beiman* in place of Musalman. Aurangzeb detained Ram Rae as a hostage at the court for Guru Har Rae's good behaviour. It also seems probable that the Emperor wished to have the Guru as a supporter of the Mughal Empire. Even after disowning Ram Rae by the Guru, Aurangzeb might have thought that the Guru would change his decision under imperial pressure. Ram Rae as the Guru would prove a pliant tool of imperial policy if he got the guruship through official support. Aurangzeb knew the depth of Gurus' influence on Jat peasantry of Majha and Malwa when he was the governor of Sind and Multan from 1648 to 1652.

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It appears that Aurangzeb's hard pressure on Guru Har Rae to change his verdict in favour of Ram Rae for which he was not prepared under any circumstances brought about Guru Har Rae's untimely death at the young age of 32.

Guru Har Krishan, 1661-1664

Guru Har Rae had nominated his younger son Har Krishan to be his successor. He was born on July 7, 1656. Thus he became Guru at the age of five, and was called the 'Child Saint. Ram Rae who was living at Delhi pressed his claim for guruship. Aurangzeb was fully occupied in setting the state affairs and had no time to turn his attention to a matter which had no urgency. In 1662 he fell seriously ill, and next year went to Kashmir to recoup his health. He returned to Delhi on January 18, 1664. Aurangzeb was a pastmaster in the art of diplomacy. He wanted to take full advantage of the rift which had developed between the two brothers. He was keen to use Ram Rae in weakening the Sikh movement. He summoned Har Krishan to Delhi to justify his claim to guruship, and asked Mirza Raja Jai Singh to call the Guru to Delhi on his personal surety.[1] The Gurus' mother

[1]Kanhiya Lal, 38; Trilochan Singh, 112.

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was terribly afraid of the machinations of Ram Rae and the stern character of the Emperor who had destroyed all his male relatives in the most brutal manner. But nobody could dare disobey Aurangzeb.

Har Krishan came to Delhi and put up in the house of Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur at the village of Raisina in the suburbs of the capital, 6 kilometres distant from the Red Fort. Shortly afterwards the Guru had an attack of smallpox with high fever, and he became almost unconscious. Owing to infectious disease the Guru was shifted to a house in village Bhogal near the present Nizam-ud-din railway station. His followers who were attending on him realized that the Guru might succumb to the fatal disease. They were anxious to secure his nomination of a successor according to old tradition. They placed a coconut[1] and five paise before him and pressed him to name his successor. In delirium the child could utter only "Baba Bakala," meaning that the next Guru lived at Bakala. As a rule, a child would never call his parents or grand-parents by name out of respect. Obviously he meant Tegh Bahadur, his grand uncle, who was living at Bakala, 4 kilometres to the north of modern Beas railway station. Having said this he closed his eyes, became unconscious and expired on March 30, 1664, at the age of eight. He was cremated on the bank of river Yamuna where now stands Gurdwara Bala Sahib.[2] A big gurdwara was later on constructed at Raisina. It is called Bangla Sahib.

[1]Kanhiya Lal calls it Sriphal, 39, 41.

[2]Guru Gobind Singh's two wives, Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi were also cremated at Bala Sahib.

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CHAPTER 10

Guru Tegh Bahadur, 1664-1675

Early life, 1621-1637

Sometimes it so happens that the parents give a name to a newly-born baby which comes out true in its future life. Guru Hargobind and his wife Mata Nanaki had been in Gwalior fort as prisoners for twelve long years. There they had suffered much. After their release they had lived at Amritsar only for a while, when their youngest child was born on Sunday, the 1 April, 1621.[1] By divine light the Guru foresaw a very hard life for the child and named him Tyag Mal, the Great Sacrificer. The 112-year-old Baba Budha blessed the baby.

The Guru's other children were Gurditta born in 1613, Bibi Viro born in 1615, Suraj Mal born in 1617, Ani Rae born in 1618, and Atal Rae born in 1619.

Best arrangements were made for Tyag Mal's education and training. He received instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, religion, music, athletics, horse riding and shooting. Bhai Budha and Bhai Gurdas looked after the child's harmonious development.

Tyag Mal was a serious child. He took little interest in playing with other children. He never quarrelled with anybody, and was calm and quiet. He listened with attention to the songs of bravery and heroism sung by *Dhadis* in front of Akal Takht. He carefully watched the wrestling matches, fighting bouts and sports contests.

[1]There is a controversy over the date of birth of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Gulab Singh in *Gurpranali*, and Gian Singh in *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, give 19 Maghar, Shudi 2, Bikrami Samvat 1678 (November, 1621).

Sohan Singh in *Gur Bilas Patshahi Chhevin*; Santokh Singh in *Suraj Prakash*; Kahan Singh in *Mahan Kosh*; *Amritsari Bansavali*, Kesar Singh Multani in *Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji ka Jiwan Britant*, Macauliffe in *Sikh Religion*, Teja Singh and Ganda Singh in *A Short History of the Sikhs*, and Trilochan Singh in *Guru Tegh Bahadur* accept Baisakh Vadi 5, 1678 BS. (1 April 1921 AD.)

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Tyag Mal was administered *charan pahul*[1] or baptism at the age of eight. Hargobind's life routine of hunting, meeting the congregations, visiting free messes, praying at Hari Mandar and holding courts at Akal Takht deeply influenced the growing mind of Tyag Mal. On the death of his brothers he became so sad and serious that he avoided worldly pleasures and turned to meditation and prayers.

In 1633 AD. Guru Hargobind was staying at Kartarpur, 15 kms west of Jalandhar. Tyag Mal was then twelve years old. Lal Chand Subhikhi Khatri of Lakhnaur near Ambala, now settled at Kartarpur, offered his daughter Gujari in marriage to the blooming lad. Mother Nanaki approved of the match and the nuptial ceremony was performed with great splendour and solemnity[2] on February 4, 1633.

Tyag Mal becomes Tegh Bahadur, 1635

In 1635 an expedition against Guru Hargobind was sent from Lahore under command of Mir Badehra and Paindah Khan.[3] They were joined by the Jalandhar troops. The Guru was then staying at Kartarpur, founded by his father Guru Arjan, lying on the main road between Amritsar and Jalandhar. The Guru had 5,000 soldiers with him.[4] In this battle Tyag Mal, a youth of fifteen, distinguished himself. The Guru was so much pleased with his bravery that he conferred the title of Tegh Bahadur on him by which name he came to be known in history.

Tegh Bahadur means Lord of the Sword. J.H.Gordon says that Tyag Mal preferred to be called Deg Bahadur, Lord of Hospitality or the supporter of the poor and cherisher of the hungry.[5]

At Bakala, 1635-56

From Kartarpur the Guru went to Phagwara. There he lived for sometime. Mohsin Fani says as the place was situated on the high-

[1]The practice of *charan pahul* was started by Guru Nanak and it was followed by all the Gurus up to 1699 AD, when the Khalsa was created by Guru Gobind Singh. At initiation a Sikh drank water in which the Guru had dipped his head finger of the foot (*Nar angusht-e-pa*). Its object was to develop the spirit of humility and meekness as this was the only way of survival for common down-trodden non-Muslims in Nanak's time.

[2]J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 193, fn. 11.

[3]*The Dabistan*. 235.

[4]M'Gregor, *History of the Sikhs*. I, 59.

[5]*The Sikhs*. 35; Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Panjab*, 259.

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way from Delhi to Lahore, 16 kms east of Jalandhar, it was not safe to reside there for long. Hence Guru Hargobind decided to settle at Kiratpur.[1] Nanaki did not like to go there with her only son and young daughter-in-law owing to the jealousy of step-children. She obtained Guru's permission to go to Bakala, her home town, and there she settled, with her parents Hari Chand and Hardevi. Tegh Bahadur was present at Kiratpur on the occasion of Guru Hargobind's death in March, 1644 together with his mother, wife and brother-in-law Kripal Chand and after the funeral rites all of them returned to Bakala.[2]

Tegh Bahadur lived at Bakala for twenty-one years. Some lands of Hargobindpur had been assigned to Tegh Bahadur and the family led a comfortable life on the share received from the cultivators. To avoid the oppressive heat of summer every well-to-do family had a cell dug into the floor where members of the household retired in the afternoon. Tegh Bahadur got such a cell excavated for him to worship in solitude. The place was called Bhaura.

Tegh Bahadur's first tour of the East, 1656-57

Sarup Singh Kaushik in *Guru Kian Sakhian*, written in 1790 A.D. in Sakhi no. 13 states that following the footsteps of Guru Nanak and Guru Amar Das, Tegh Bahadur decided to go on a pilgrimage to the sacred places in the East. His mother Mata Nanaki, wife Mata Gujari, her brother Kripal Chand, Mata Hari, Suraj Mal's wife, and five devoted disciples including Dyal Das, elder brother of Bhai Mani Singh and Sadhu Ram Khosla, first went to Kiratpur in June, 1656. From there they visited Kurukshetra where they stayed for a pretty long time. They were at Hardwar on the Baisakhi day, 29 March, 1657. They lived there for several months. After attending the fair at Garh Mukteshwar in October, 1657, the party returned to the Panjab.[3]

The second journey to the East, 1660-1664

Shahd Bilas describes a second journey of Guru Tegh Bahadur to the holy places of pilgrimage. His wife Mata Gujari did not join the Guru. With some family members and a number of disciples Guru Tegh

[1] *The Dabistan*, 235.
[2] Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, I. 264.
[3] Vide Fauja Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 10.

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Bahadur left home in 1660 A.D, and visited Kurukshetra, Delhi, Mathura, Agra and Prayag. They were at Prayag on 19 April, 1661, and at Banaras on 21 June, 1661. The Bhat Vahi Purbi Dakhni on 21 June, 1661, recorded their visit to Banaras as follows :

"Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji betā Guru Hargobindji Mahal Chhate kā Banaras āye, sāl satrah sai atharan Asāṛh, Sudi Panchmi, gail Nanakiji āyi Mata Guru Tegh Bahadurji ki, Mata Hariji āyi istri Guru Suraj Mal ki, Bhai Kripal Chand āyā betā Lal Chand Subhiki ka, Bawa Dyāl Dās āyā betā Mai Das Jalhane ka, Gawal Das āyā betā Chhote Mal Chhibbar ka, Chaupat Rae āyā betā Pera Chhibbar kā, Sangat āyā betā Binna Uppal ka; Sadhu Ram āyā betā Dharme Khosle ka."[1]

[On 21 June, 1661, Banaras was visited by Guru Tegh Bahadur son of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru. He was accompanied by Nanaki mother of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Mata Hariji wife of Guru Suraj Mal, Bhai Kripal Chand son of Lal Chand Subhiki, Bawa Dyal Das son of Mai Das Jalhana, Gawal Das son of Chhote Mal Chhibbar, Chaupat (Champat?) Rae son of Pera Chhibbar, Sangat son of Binna Uppal and Sadhu Ram son of Dharma Khosla.]

From Banaras the party went to Sasaram and then to Gaya. Afterwards they came to Patna, and turned homeward. They visited Banaras again and then took the road towards Prayag. It was on the way they heard the news of the death of Guru Har Rae. They prayed for the deceased's soul at Tribaini, the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and Sarasvati.

The Bhat Vahi Purbi Dakhni recorded :

"Guru Tegh Bahadurji beta Guru Hargobindji Mahal Chhai, Guru Har Rae ji ki Parchavni karn Patna se āye; s'āl satrāh sai unnis Shukla pakh Magh mās ki Panchmi ke divas tīrath Prāgraj Sangam te āye pahunche, gail Mata Nanakiji āye mahal Guru Hargobindji ke; Mata Hariji āye mahal Guru Suraj Malji ke; Diwan Dargaha Mal āyā beta Dwarka Das Chhibbar ka; hor Sikh faqir āye."[2]

[On 4 January, 1663, Guru Tegh Bahadur son of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, came from Patna to Prayag at the confluence (of Ganga, Yamuna and Sarasvati) to pray for peace to the soul of Guru Har Rae (who had died on October 6, 1661). He was accompanied by Mata Nanakiji widow of Guru Hargobind, Mata Hariji wife of Guru Suraj Mal, Diwan Dargaha Mal son of Dwarka Das Chhibbar, and other Sikh followers.]

[1]Fauja Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 22.
[2]ibid, 23.

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Visiting several notable places Tegh Bahadur reached Delhi on 21 March, 1664, according to *Bhat Vahi Purbi Dakhni* and *Guru Kian Sakhian*. Guru Har Krishan was already there. Tegh Bahadur met the young Guru and offered condolences to Mata Sulakhni on Guru Har Rae's death.[1] Fearing his own detention by Aurangzeb at Delhi, perhaps from a hint from Mirza Raja Jai Singh, Tegh Bahadur immediately slipped away from Delhi and returned to Bakala.

Nomination as the ninth Guru

Two or three days after Tegh Bahadur's departure from Delhi, Guru Har Krishan had a virulent attack of smallpox on 25 March, 1664. On 30 March a little before his death he nominated Tegh Bahadur his successor.

The Bhat Vahi Talauda Pargana Jind, recorded :

"Guru Har Krishanji Mahal Āthvan Beta Guru Har Rae Ji ka Surajbansi Gosal Gotra Sodhi Khatri Sal 1721 Chait māse shudi chaudah Budhvar ke dihon pānch paise nāryal mangāi, tin bār dāin bhujā Ghamāi, dhimi āwāj se bachan kiyā kih mera Baba Tegh Bahadur Bakalewala ko asān ke pichhe Guru jānanā, jo jānegā Guru tis ki bahuri karegā, āge Guruji ki gat Guru jāne."[2]

[Guru Har Krishan, the eighth Guru, son of Guru Har Rae, Surajbansi Gosal Gotra Sodhi Khatri, on 30 March, 1664, sent for five paise and one coconut. He moved his right arm three times, and in a low voice said: 'After me recognise Baba Tegh Bahadur of Bakala as the Guru. Those who do so will be blessed by the Guru. What happens afterwards may be known to the Guru himself.]

Thus it is clear beyond any doubt that Guru Har Krishan left no ambiguity or vagueness about Guru Tegh Bahadur's succession as the ninth Guru.

Guru Har Krishan expired on 30 March, 1664. He was cremated at Delhi on the banks of river Yamuna. The site is marked by Gurdwara Bala Sahib. The holy remains were immersed in the Ganga at Hardwar by his mother Mata Sulakhni, his elder brother Ram Rae and Diwan Dargaha Mal on May 13, 1664.[3]

Confirmation as Guru, 1664

Meanwhile Guru Har Krishan's nomination of Tegh Bahadur had

[1]Fauja Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 19-20.
[2]ibid, 35 (1).
[3]ibid. 35 (2).

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spread among the Sodhis of Kiratpur, Kartarpur, Amritsar and other places. Twenty-two of them representing the *manjis* established by Guru Amar Das, set up their posts in village Bakala to claim guruship. Eleven of them were Sodhis and the remaining eleven were *masands* or Sikh bishops.[1] The most clamorous of them was Dhir Mal, nephew of Tegh Bahadur and the murderer of Guru Hargobind. He had shifted from Kartarpur to Bakala on hearing the news of Guru Har Krishan's death. He based his claim on the principle of primogeniture or seniority by birth, although this principle was never accepted by the Sikh Gurus, nor even by the Mughal rulers. Further, he possessed the original copy of the *Adi Granth* prepared by Guru Arjan. He also employed many touts and some *masands* to proclaim his succession as the ninth Guru.

Tegh Bahadur remained undisturbed and unruffled by the uproar of imposters. By the divine light he knew that the call was for him, and he firmly believed that if he deserved, it would come to him automatically without any efforts on his part. So he did not change his way of living and kept busy in meditation and prayer as usual. His mother and wife also knew from intuition that the great hour in their lives had struck. But the violent activities of Dhir Mal greatly alarmed the ladies. Mother Nanaki invited Dwarka Das, great grandson of Guru Amar Das from Goindwal to come to Bakala to disclose the true facts and settle the matter once for all.

During the minority of Har Krishan, the Guru's affairs were managed by a council of five, called Panchayat whose decisions were implicitly obeyed according to ancient tradition. It consisted of the following members: Gurditta Randhawa son of Bhai Budha, served as the high priest, Dargaha Mal son of Dwarka Das Chhibbar, a Mohyal Brahman of Jehlam district, controlled finances. He had the designation of Diwan and presided over its meetings. His nephews, Mati Das and Sati Das, were in charge of Guru's bodyguards and correspondence respectively. Dyal Das of Alipur in Multan district, the eldest brother of Bhai Mani Singh Shahid, acted as a judge to decide disputes. The council had collective responsibility, and worked as a miniature cabinet.

Dwarka Das invited all the five members of Guru Har Krishan's council from Kiratpur to announce their decision about the next

[1]Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, 110; Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 139, fn. 5.

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Guru, and offer the sacred articles of nomination to the new Guru on behalf of the deceased Guru. All of them including Mata Sulakhni, widow of Guru Har Rae, and mother of Guru Har Krishan reached Bakala in August, 1664.

They went to mother Nanaki's house and gave account of Guru Har Krishan's death, and his nomination of Tegh Bahadur as the ninth Guru. A meeting of prominent persons of Bakala was called. The high priest Gurditta placed the sacred coconut and five copper coins before Tegh Bahadur, bowed before him, and affirmed him the ninth Guru. Tegh Bahadur accepted the sacred articles in all reverence and humility and declared that he would remain ever loyal to the house of Nanak. This took place on 11 August, 1664.[1]

The Bhat Vahi Talauda Pargana Jind, Khātā Jalhana Balauton ka says:

"Diwan Dargaha Mal beta Dwarka Das Chhibbar ka pota Prag Das ka parpota Gautam ka, Chaupat Rae beta Pere ka, pota Gautam Chhibbar ka, Jetha beta Mai Das pota Balu ka parpota Mule ka, Mani Ram beta Mai Das ka pota Balu ka, Jaggu beta Padme ka pota Kaule ka parpota Ambia ka, Gurbakhsh beta Bābe ka, Nanu beta Babe ka, pote Umaide ke, Dilli se Guru Har Krishan ji Mahal Athven ki Mata Sulakhni ke sāth Bakala āye, sal satrah sai ikkis māh Bhādva ki amāvas Shukarvār ke dihon Guru Tegh Bahadurji Mahal Name ko Guru Dwarka Das beta Guru Arjani Sahib ka pota Guru Mohri ka ki āgyā pāe Baba Gurdittaji ne Guryāī kā tikkā kiye."[2]

[Mata Sulakhni, mother of late Guru Har Krishan accompanied by Dargaha Mal, Chaupat Rae, Jetha and Mani Ram both brothers, Jaggu, Gurbakhsh and Nanu both brothers, in all 8 persons came from Delhi to Bakala. They were joined by Dwarka Das Bhalla from Goindwal and Gurditta son of Baba Budha from Kiratpur where he was managing the Guru's affairs. As directed by Dwarka Das Bhalla, Gurditta applied the saffron mark on the forehead of Tegh Bahadur in token of the conferment of guruship on him on Friday, 11 August, 1664.]

At Kiratpur, 21 August, 1664

After the installation ceremony on 11 August, 1664, at Bakala, Guru Tegh Bahadur accompanied by Dwarka Das Bhalla, Diwan

[1]Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*, I, 150.
[2]Fauja Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 35 (2).

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Dargaha Mal and Jaggu came on 21 August, 1664, to Kiratpur to condole with Bibi Rup Kaur, sister of Guru Har Krishan, and joined in the ceremonial immersion of late Guru's ashes in the river Satluj on 22 August, 1664.[1]

Makhan Shah seals the affair, 9 October, 1664

The impostors declared the installation ceremony a fraud. They continued propaganda in their favour and against Guru Tegh Bahadur. They managed some Sikhs to come and pay them homage, while Tegh Bahadur lived on quietly without any fret or fuss.

Makhan Shah[2] was a rich merchant of village Tanda in Pargana Muzaffarabad, Kashmir. He belonged to the famous Banjara tribe,[3] the carriers of grain, gur, oil and salt, all over India in medieval times, and suppliers of goods to Muslim armies while on march and in the field. He was a believer in Sikh Gurus. To avert a calamity befalling him, he had prayed to the Guru to save him, vowing in his heart to make an offering of 101[4] gold coins to the Guru by way of thanksgiving. It was to fulfil this vow that he had come to Bakala on the Diwali day, Saturday, 9 October, 1664, on his way home in Kashmir with a large cavalcade. He was accompanied by his wife, two sons, many servants and numerous pack oxen, bullock-carts, camels, horses, hounds and armed retainers. Finding a multitude of gurus at Bakala, he went on offering two coins to everyone. Makhan Shah was deeply disgusted and disappointed with all these pretenders as none demanded the full amount of his dedication. Last of all he was directed to call on Tegh Bahadur, and laid down two coins before him. Tegh Bahadur closed his eyes for a moment, and then said: Brother, your vow was for 101 and not for 2 coins. Makhan Shah instantaneously fell at the Guru's feet. Then in the highest excitement, he rushed to the housetop and shouted, "*Guru ladhore*, Guru ladhore,[5] meaning the Guru is here,

[1] Bhat Vahi Multani Sindhi, Patiala, vide Fauja Singh, op. cit., 36 (4).

[2] According to Gian Singh, Makhan Shah belonged to village Tanda in Jehlam district. *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, I, 265; Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*, I, 149

[3] 'Banjaras acknowledge one God and look on Guru Nanak as the Supreme Teacher". W. Crook, *Tribes and Castes of North-West India*, I, 154.

[4] This number is given in *Bhat Vahi Bijlauton ki*, and *Guru Kian Sakhian*. vide Fauja Singh, op. cit., 37 (5).

[5] Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, Ras. II, Ansu 2 and 5; Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, 110; *Tarikh Guru Khalsa*, I, 265.

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I have found him. Makhan Shah's followers who had accompanied him joined him in a loud acclamation. In a moment the whole village was up with the news.

Dhir Mal's attempt on Guru's life

Dhir Mal felt outraged at Makhan Shah's intervention. On Makhan Shah's retirement to his camp, about a hundred of Dhir Mal's armed followers attacked the house of Guru Tegh Bahadur. His *masand* Shihan fired at the Guru, and the bullet grazed his shoulder. The house was thoroughly sacked. On hearing this Makhan Shah appeared on the scene. His men fell upon Dhir Mal's residence, recovered Guru's property, seized some article of Dhir Mal including the original copy of the *Adi Granth*.[1] When Tegh Bahadur heard about it, he declared:

To exercise forgiveness is a great act,
To exercise forgiveness is to give alms.
Forgiveness is equal to ablutions at all places of pilgrimage,
Forgiveness ensureth man's salvation,
There is no virtue equal to forgiveness."[2]

The Guru ordered that everything brought from Dhir Mal's house whether it belonged to the Guru or to the culprit must be restored at once. The order was partially obeyed as the copy of the holy *Granth* was retained without the knowledge of the Guru. It was also returned afterwards.

Tegh Bahadur at Amritsar, 22 November, 1664

Having been established on the Guru *gaddi*, Tegh Bahadur decided to pay his respect at Hari Mandar. He reached Amritsar on 22 November, 1664. He was accompanied by his mother Nanaki, wife Gujari, her brother Kripal Chand and a few followers. Makhan Shah while returning from home visited the Guru, and joined him in his visit to Amritsar.

As the sixth, seventh and eighth Gurus remained absent from Amritsar, the *masands* offered their allegiance to Prithi Mal as the sixth guru, to his son, Manohar Das Meharban as the seventh guru, and to Meharban's son Harji as the eighth guru. They installed a duplicate original copy of the Pothi Sahib in the Hari Mandar. The usual routine of *kirtan* and recitation was maintained. Hari Mandar and

[1]Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, Ras II, Ansu 13.
[2]Macauliffe, IV, 335.

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Guru Hargobind's houses and property were in Harji's possession. According to *Bhat Vahi* and *Guru Kian Sakhian* Harji with his son Kanwal Nain and some followers called on Guru Tegh Bahadur to offer congratulations. But his men closed the doors of the temple and refused to admit Tegh Bahadur and his companions.[1] Guru Tegh Bahadur and his party rested under a tree only a few metres to the north of Akal Takht. This place is termed Thara Sahib[2] or the Platform. A gurdwara marks that site. Makhan Shah was strictly forbidden to take any action against the culprits. A peasant woman, Hariyan, of village Walla,[3] 9 kms to the north of Amritsar, offered her house as a shelter for the Guru and his companions. Tegh Bahadur retired there in the evening to spend the night and put up in the upper storey. In honour of the Guru's visit a fair is held at Walla called *Kothe da Mela* on the full-moon day of Maghar[4] (November-December). In the absence of Harji's men, Makhan Shah forced open the door of Hari Mandar. Guru Tegh Bahadur was admitted to the temple where he worshipped for a while. The Bhat Vahi Multani Sindhi recorded Guru Tegh Bahadur's entry into Hari Mandar on the full-moon day of Mangsar[5] 1721 Bikrami. He then left for Khadur, the place dedicated to Guru Angad and Goindwal, the seat of the third Guru, Amar Das. He returned to Bakala. The Sikhs completely boycotted Sodhis of Guru Har Sahae and Kartarpur, and called them *minas* or contemptible rebels.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's visit to Kiratpur and Bilaspur, May, 1665

The Guru settled at Bakala again, but "he was not allowed to abide in peace, for the old jealousy and enmity of Sodhis had been revived.[6] He visited Kiratpur on May 7, 1665. There he learnt that Raja Dip Chand of Kahlur had died and his *shrādh* ceremony was to take place on 13 May, 1665. Rani dowager Champa invited Guru Tegh Bahadur,

[1] *Bhat Vahi Tumar Bijlauton ki* and *Guru Kian Sakhian*, quoted by Fauja Singh, op. cit., 30, fn. 10.

[2] Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, I, 266; Jagjit Singh, *Temple of Spirituality*, 24.

[3] Two shrines were later on erected in this village to commemorate Guru Tegh Bahadur's visit; one is outside the village and the other inside it.

[4] Macauliffe, IV. 337.

[5] Sabinderjit Sagar in an article entitled, "Amritsar in earlier Gurmukhi literature", in *The City of Amritsar*, edited by Fauja Singh, 397.

[6] ibid.

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his relatives and disciples to attend the function. The Guru arrived at Bilaspur accompanied by Mata Nanaki, Mata Hariji wife of Suraj Mal, Mata Sulakhni, Dip Chand and Nand Chand sons of Suraj Mal, Diwan Dargaha Mal, Jetha, Dyal Das and several others. The Rani gave a warm welcome to the Guru and his companions, and put up the Guru in her palace. Tegh Bahadur told her that he wished to found a village for his own residence in the Rani's territory. She at once offered him land in the villages of Lodipur, Mianpur and Shahode. The Guru stayed in Rani's palace for three days and then returned to Kiratpur. The Guru chose the site in Makhowal village and paid the registration fee of about Rs. 500. The ownership stone was laid by Gurditta Randhawa son of Baba Budha on 19 June, 1665, and the area was named Chak Nanaki after the Guru's mother. It was situated 13 kms from Kiratpur below the Naina Devi hill. The Guru returned to Bakala.

Tegh Bahadur's imprisonment at Delhi, November, 1665-January, 1666

After some time the Guru undertook a tour of Malwa where sangats had been established by Guru Hargobind. He journeyed from village to village preaching his gospel, and hunting in the jungles.

Aurangzeb could not tolerate Guru Tegh Bahadur's preaching. Further, he might have been goaded to take action against the Guru by Ram Rae. In the beginning of November, 1665, the Guru was hunting at village Dhamthan situated between Narwana and Tohana, 170 kms from Delhi. Alam Khan (Alo Khan according to Assamese work *Badshah Buranji*) Rohilla bearing warrants issued by Emperor himself came from Delhi. On 8 November, 1665 he arrested Guru Tegh Bahadur along with Mati Das and Sati Das both brothers, Gawal Das, Gurdas, Sangat, Jetha and Dyal Das both brothers, and several other Sikhs.[1]

They were brought to Delhi. The Guru was imprisoned in the house of Prince Ram Singh son of Mirza Raja Jai Singh. The Emperor issued orders of Guru's execution. The prince strongly pleaded with the Emperor for mercy and to rescind his order. He undertook full responsibility for Guru's conduct and secured his liberty on 11 January, 1666. The Guru remained in confinement for two months and three days.[2]

[1]Bhat Vahi Jadobansian, Khata Barthian; Vide Fauja Singh, op. cit. 42, 57.
[2]ibid, 58.

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The Guru's third journey to the East 1665-1670

The Guru went to Bakala. "Here too he was not allowed to abide in peace, for the old jealousy and enmity of the Sodhis had revived."[1] He visited Kiratpur on 7 May, 1665. "There again he was plagued with the jealousy of the Sodhis."[2] Guru Tegh Bahadur made up his mind to go on a pilgrimage to the east, where he had been twice before and where he had established a number of Sikh centres. The reasons were plain. He did not find the atmosphere in the Panjab and Delhi congenial for his work. He wished to follow the example of Guru Nanak by visiting holy places. He was desirous of meeting the Sikhs living outside the Panjab at many places in northern India. He was keen to propagate the new religion and to give consolation to suffering humanity.

Tegh Bahadur left Panjab on November 22, 1665.[3] He was accompanied by his mother, wife, Kripal Chand, Dyal Das, Mati Das, Sati Das, Gurditta and a few more devoted followers. He had his own tents, horses, carriages, bullocks, camels and necessary goods to meet his requirements in the journey. Nawab Saif-ud-din of Saifabad presented the Guru a horse, a chariot, a tent, some camels and a few bullock-driven carts. The Guru usually halted outside a village or town in a garden or on the bank of a river or stream.[4]

Visiting Pehowa and Kurukshetra, and avoiding Delhi on the way, the Guru went to Mathura, Brindaban, Agra, Etawah and Kanpur. He reached Allahabad about February, 1666. At the last place he stayed for two months. Guru Gobind Singh wrote in the *Bachitar Natak:*

Mur pit purab kīn payānā
Bhānt bhānt ke tirath nānā
Jab he jāt Tribaini bhaye
Pun dān karat batye.[5]

(My father went to the east,
He visited all sorts of places of pilgrimages;
When he reached Tribaini (Prayag),
He remained busy in alms-giving.)

[1]ibid.
[2]ibid, 338.
[3]ibid, 339.
[4]Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, Ras II, Ansu, 33.
[5]*Bachitar Natak*, 7/1.

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It was at this sacred place in the holy atmosphere and celestial environment when Guru Tegh Bahadur was busy in giving away his spiritual and material wealth that Mata Gujari conceived for the first time in thirty-three years of her married life. Passing through Mirzapur, Banaras and Sasaram, blessing his Sikhs who called on him from various places such as Baharkhal, Bhawanipur, Chitaura, Sadalpur, all situated in Bihar, the Guru reached Gaya. There he was joined by Raja Ram Singh[1] of Amber. They arrived at Patna in August, 1666.

The Guru accompanies Ram Singh to Dhaka

Shortly after the Guru's departure from Delhi Raja Ram Singh was involved in a serious trouble. On the solemn pledge given by Mirza Raja Jai Singh as a Rajput for their safety and honour, Shivaji and his elder son visited Aurangzeb at Agra on May 12, 1666. He was placed under the custody of Raja Ram Singh. Finding their lives in danger, Shivaji and his son Shambhuji escaped from Agra by a stratagem on August 19, 1666. Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes: "The Emperor suspected that Shivaji had fled with the connivance of Ram Singh. The Rajput prince was punished first by being forbidden the Court and then by being deprived of his rank and pay."[2] Aurangzeb then ordered the Prince to lead an expedition for the conquest of Assam. In reality, he was sent there either to die of Malaria, which was rampant in those parts and of which Aurangzeb's great general Mir Jumla had died on March 31, 1663, or to be killed in fighting or in the event of defeat, he was to be disgraced and punished with the confiscation of his state of Amber (Jaipur).[3]

The base of Ram Singh's operations was to be Dhaka which was capital of Bengal. Shaista Khan, Emperor's maternal uncle was its governor. A Mughal army formerly under Mir Jumla was already there. Ram Singh was required to take charge of this force along with his own troops. To begin with he was to make a preliminary survey of the situation, while the formal order of his appointment accompanied by a *khilat* was issued later.[4]

Ram Singh did not wish to stay at the court in an atmosphere of disgrace, humiliation and suspicion. He wanted to study the situation, and then call his armed force to join him. The young prince thought

[1]Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*, I, p. 151.
[2]*A Short History of Aurangzib*, 204.
[3]Macauliffe, IV, 350.
[4]Firman no. 102 of 29 July, 1669, *Jaipur State Archives*.

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of one remedy to secure his safety in the unhealthy climate and hostile jungles, hills, wild elephants, and a determined sorcerous foe. It was to keep Guru Tegh Bahadur with him. He issued in pursuit of Tegh Bahadur and met him at Gaya. He implored the Guru to keep him company during the operations. He said "it was certain death to command the invading army, and it would be equally fatal for me to disobey the Emperor's orders. Hence I have come from distant Rajputana to seek the protection of thy holy feet."[1] The Raja did not like to stay at Patna, a stronghold of the Mughals in the east, and he wanted to be at his post without any delay. The Guru would not disappoint a true devotee. He could not take his family with him owing to the approaching confinement of his wife. He left the family at Patna without making suitable arrangements for their residence. He exhorted the local Sikhs to help Kripal Chand, Dyal Das and Gurditta in looking after his family, and himself with Mati Das and Sati Das accompanied the Prince. From Monghyr, 160 kms distant, the Guru wrote a letter to the Sikhs of Patna:

"We are accompanying Raja Ji and have left our family at Patna. It is time for congregation to serve."[2] He added:

Bhai Dyal Das Kahe
Sangat Guru ka hukam kar manna.[3]

(Whatever Bhai Dyal Das says, the *Sangat* should accept it as Guru's command.)

The Sikhs built a house for the Guru's family and called it Hari Mandar.[4] "Nawabs Rahim Bux and Karim Bux, who were great admirers of the Guru, offered a garden and a village to him, and they are to this day attached to the gurdwara at Patna."[5]

In letter no. 15 of Fauja Singh's collection of Guru Tegh Bahadur's *Hukam Namas*, the Guru told the *Sangat* of Patna that he was travelling with Raja (Ram Singh). He said that his family left at Patna should be put up in a fine building. The Guru and the Raja both prolonged their stay at Monghyr due to heavy rains and widespread floods. Letter no. 13 in the above collection was addressed to 15 men

[1]Kirpal Singh, *Patna Collection of Hukum Namas*, quoted in S.S. Uppal's *Guru Gobind Singh—The Saviour*, 89.
[2]Kirpal Singh, *Patna Collection of Hukam Namas*.
[3]Trilochan Singh, 219, 222, 223.
[4]Indrajit Prasad Singh, *The Sikh Review*, March, 1978, p. 63.
[5]Zameer Hasan Kazmi, *The Sikh Review*, December, 1976, p. 25.

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by name and one woman, Bebe Peri Bai at Patna. The Guru invited the *masands* of the area to meet him. Letter no. 14 addressed to 45 men and Peri Bai stated that Guru would leave Monghyr in October. The *Hukam Nama* no. 16 says that the Raja left seven days ago, probably to make arrangements at Bhagalpur, while the Guru followed him three days later. Letter no. 22 states that one mule and two bullocks of Guru's stables had been stolen from Jamalpur by the cattle-lifters of Dhardeo. The bullocks were recovered. Bhai Malla and Bhai Bagha were requested to get back the mule. Jamalpur town is close to Monghyr.

The Guru and the Raja reached Dhaka in December, 1666. There in January, 1667. Tegh Bahadur got the happy news conveyed by harkaras or government mail carriers or by the agents of Jagat Seths of the birth of his son, whom he named Gobind Das[1] on December 22, 1666 (13 Posh shudi 7, Samvat 1723, Sunday night). In Letter no. 6 addressed to 43 men and sister Peri Bai, the Guru conveyed his blessings to Patna *Sangat* for service to Gobind Das. In letter no. 4 addressed to 64 men and Peri Bai, the Guru expressed great joy for spending money at the birth of Gobind Das. "Each silver rupee spent carried the blessing of a gold coin." Another *Hukam Nama*, addressed to 70 men and Peri Bai, acknowledged receipt of the offerings sent by them.

The Guru at Dhaka and in Assam, 1667-1670

Ram Singh spent two years in carrying on negotiations for the peaceful submission of Ahoms of Assam, and at the same time in making preparations for the full-fledged war against them.

The Mughal troops were already there. His Rajput forces joined him long after his arrival at Dhaka. The Prince was accompanied in this journey only by a suitable contingent as bodyguard. Guru Tegh Bahadur also stayed here with the Prince, and visited many places in the neighbourhood to meet Guru's Sikhs.

Ram Singh and Guru Tegh Bahadur left Dhaka in December, 1668 and reached in Dhubri in Assam, about 300 kms distant in February, 1669. Ram Singh's expeditionary force consisted of 4,000 Rajputs, 18,000 Mughals all horsemen, 30,000 infantry, and 15,000 local archers.[2]

The Guru remained busy in meditation and prayers, giving his blessings to the Rajputs and other[3] visitors. His fame spread far and wide.

[1]Macauliffe, IV, 358, wrongly names the child Gobind Rae.

[2]Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, *Shri Guru Dashmesh Prakash*, 12.

[3]A newsletter of the Mughal Court issued on 13 May, 1710, stated; "Tyag Mal, successor of Guru Nanak, stayed in Assam with the late Máharaja Ram Singh Jio." Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, 83.

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A prince of some state in Assam, named Raja Ram, heard about the Guru. He had no son, and earnestly desired to have a successor. He came with his two wives to pay homage to the Guru and requested for the boon of a son. The Guru blessed him.[1]

Aurangzeb's fanaticism against Hindus

Guru Tegh Bahadur stayed with Raja Ram Singh in Assam for about two years and a half. Meanwhile reports of Aurangzeb's fanaticism and his determination to convert the Hindu population to Islam, and to make Hindu India a purely Muslim state began to pour in Ram Singh's camp.

In the beginning of his reign Aurangzeb ordered, "the local officers in every town and village of Orissa from Katak to Mednipur to pull down all temples including even clay huts, built during the last 10 or 12 years, and to allow no old temple to be repaired."[2] In 1661-62 a big temple was demolished at Mathura and a Jama Masjid was erected in its place in the heart of Hindu population.[3] From April, 1665, Hindus were charged double the customs duties paid by Muslims on all articles brought for sale.[4] In May, 1667, Muslims were exempted from payment of customs duties altogether, while Hindus had to pay at the old rate of five percent. In 1668 Hindus fairs and festivals were stopped.[5] According to Irfan Habib peasants in many cases were compelled to part with their women and children for good to meet the revenue demands.[6]

Muhammad Saqi Musta-id Khan in *Masir-e-Alamgiri*, p. 81, says that in April, 1669, the "Director of the Faith issued orders to all the governors of provinces to destroy with a willing hand the schools and temples of the infidels, and they were strictly enjoined to put an entire stop to the teaching and practising of idolatrous forms of worship.[7] In May, 1669, Gokal, a Jat of Tilpat, near Mathura revolted. Aurangzeb sent a strong force against him. Gokal was captured and cut to pieces. His womenfolk were given away to Muslims. Five

[1]Macauliffe, IV, 357.

[2]*Muraqat-e-Abul Hasan*, 202, cited and translated by Sri Ram Sharma, in *The Religious Policy of Mughal Emperors*, 130.

[3]Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *A Short History of Aurangzib*, 152.

[4]ibid, 150.

[5]ibid.

[6]Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, 322.

[7]Elliot & Dowson, VII, 183-4.

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thousand Jats were killed and 7,000 were taken prisoners.[1] In January, 1670, the biggest temple of Keshav Rae at Mathura was destroyed and the city was named Islamabad.[2] The temple was built by Raja Narsing Deo at a cost of thirty-three lakhs of rupees. Its guilded domes were so high that they could be seen from Agra, 54 kms distant. Syed Muhammad Latif says : "The richly decorated idols of the temples were removed to Agra and placed beneath the steps leading to the mosque of Nawab Begam.[3] The destruction of Hindu places of worship was one of the chief duties of the *Muhtasibs* or Censors of Morals who were appointed in all the sub-divisions and cities of the empire.[4] About three hundred temples in various parts of Rajasthan were destroyed and their idols broken.[5]

Against the Sikhs

As regards the Sikhs, the contemporary historian Khafi Khan writes: "There is a sect of infidels called Guru, more commonly known as Sikhs. Their chief, who dresses as a *fakir*, has a fixed residence near Lahore. From old times he has built temples in all the towns and populous places, and has appointed one of his followers to preside in each temple as his deputy. When anyone of the sect brought presents or offerings for the Guru to the temple, the deputy had to collect them, and after deducting sufficient for his own food and expenses, his duty was to send the balance faithfully to the Guru. This sect consists principally of Jats and Khatris of the Panjab and of other tribes of infidels. When Aurangzeb got knowledge of those matters, he ordered these deputy Gurus to be removed and the temples to be pulled down."[6]

Kalimat-e-Tayibat says a Sikh temple in a village in the Sarhind division was turned into a mosque.[7] Mirza Inayatullah Khan in his book *Ahkam-e-Alamgiri* on pages 12-13 states that under Aurangzeb's orders a gurdwara of the Sikhs (*Butkhana-e-Nanakprastan*) in the town of Buriya, *Parganah* Khizarabad, Sarkar Sarhind, was pulled down by the Qazi and a mosque was built in its place. Sayyid Zafar Darvesh was appointed in charge of that mosque to guide prayers and bene-

[1] Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *A Short History of Aurangzib*, 152.
[2] ibid, 147-8.
[3] *History of Panjab*, 176.
[4] Sir Jadunath Sarkar, op. cit.
[5] Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of Panjab*, 176.
[6] *Muntkhab-ul-Lubab*, II, 651; *E&D, Later Mughals*, p. 26.
[7] Sri Ram Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughals, Emperors* 115.

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dictions. Some Sikhs attacked the mosque and killed the Darvesh. The Emperor suspended the Qazi and the Superintendent of police (Mohtsib). Alimullah was appointed Qazi and his father head of the police. Such incidents had become common.

The Guru returns to Panjab, 1670

When Guru Tegh Bahadur heard of these things, he decided to return to Panjab. The Raja asked the Guru to meet his family members at Delhi and to tell them that he was hale and hearty. He took leave of Ram Singh early in 1670 and speedily came to Patna by a shorter route where he stayed for a while. He showed his determination to proceed to Panjab without any delay. His Sikhs and supporters suggested that the Guru should leave his family at Patna for the present and recall them if he found the situation favourable in Panjab. The Guru agreed:

Having travelled for a few days, he changed his mind. He did not like to leave the family 1250 kms away from Kiratpur. He stopped and sent his trusted men to escort the family. In a fortnight they joined Tegh Bahadur at the place of his halting. Stopping on the way at prominent places the Guru arrived at Agra in June, 1670. He was arrested under Emperor's orders, and was brought to Delhi on June 20, 1670. The Guru was accompanied by Diwan Dargaha Mal and Nawab Saif Khan. His family members along with Kripal Chand, Mati Das and Sati Das were separated from Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Guru was kept for a day or so at Dharamsala of Bhai Kalyana. Ram Singh's mother and wife came to the Dharamsala to enquire about the Raja's state of affairs. The Guru remained under imperial surveillance (*Shahi nazarbandi*) for two months and thirteen days. After his liberation the whole party reached Lakhnaur 15 kms from Ambala city and 30 kms to the east of Patiala, on 13 September, 1670. They put up with Mehar Chand Subhikhi elder brother of Mata Gujari. On the Dasahra day Mehar Chand performed the *Sirvarna* ceremony of Gobind Das who wore *zamurdi rang ki pag* (green-coloured turban), and distributed sweet pudding.[1] The Guru left his family there under the protection of Bhikhan Shah, an influential chief of Ghuram, situated nearby and Nawab Saif Khan of Saifabad, a town 6 kms east of Patiala now called Bahadurgarh. He went to Nanaki Chak to erect a house for his residence.

A gurdwara known as Lakhnaur Sahib commemorates Guru's stay

[1]Bhat Vahi Talauda Pargana Jind. Fauja Singh, op. cit. 53.

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there. A fair is held there on Dasahra day.

Sayyid Bhikhan Shah of Ghuram came to see 4-year-old Gobind Das. He placed two pots of sweets before the child as his offerings. The young diviner put both of his hands on both the pots simultaneously. The Pir was delighted. He told his companions that in his own mind one pot signified Hinduism and the other Islam. He wanted to see which religion was liked by the child. Gobind Das showed that he loved both the religions,[1] he observed. The Guru had been supplied by Raja Ram Singh[2] and his Rajputs with a sum of seven lakhs[3] of rupees,[4] on the occasion of his departure from Assam, mostly in the form of *Darshani Hundis*[5] (bearer cheques or drafts) issued by Jagat Seths on the bankers of important towns and cities. Their credit existed not only in India but also all over Asia, especially in central and western Asia closely connected by trade with India. With this money the Guru first built his own house named Bhaura Sahib and called his family from Lakhnaur after[6] seven months on Baisakhi day in 1671.

The Guru felt extremely happy at having a place of his own to reside like the previous Gurus. Nanak lived at Kartarpur on the Ravi, Angad at Khadur on the Beas, Amar Das at Goindwal also on river Beas, Ram Das and Arjan at Amritsar, Hargobind, Har Rae and Har Krishan at Kiratpur. The sight of Dhaula Dhar covered with snow, the hill of Naina Devi in front and the river Satluj flowing nearby fascinated him. The joy of having a loving mother, captivating wife, a gifted son and a lovely place to live inspired him He took strolls on the open high ground now marked by a cluster of buildings lying behind the Gurdwara Keshgarh. He named that area Anandpur or the abode of bliss. Sir George Campbell who served as a deputy commissioner on the Satluj in 1844 calls this place "Anandpore-Mekhowal.[7]

[1]Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, op. cit., 39-40.

[2]Sewa Singh, *Shahid Bilas*, 59. Cunningham writes: "After a time Tegh Bahadur returned to the Punjab, and bought a piece of ground, now known as Makhowal, on the bank of the Sutlej and close to Kiratpur, the chosen residence of his father. *A History of the Sikhs*, 57.

[3]Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 177.

[4]Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, 1, 270.

[5]Surinder Singh Johar, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 37.

[6]Kartar Singh Kalaswalia puts this period at four months. *Shri Guru Dashmesh Prakash*, 42.

[7]*Memoris of My Indian Career*, 1, 77.

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The revolt on the North-West frontier, 1672

About this time the sky began to darken. In the spring of 1672 Afridis of the Khaibar pass revolted and inflicted terrible losses on the Mughals. "Ten thousand men fell under the enemy's sword in the field, and above two krores of rupees in cash and kind was looted by the enemy. They captured twenty thousand men and women and sent them to Central Asia for sale."[1] The Afridis were also joined by Khataks. Their chieftain Khushhal Khan, a great poet and warrior, inspired tribesmen in their defiance of the Mughals both by pen and sword. The Emperor sent a huge army to suppress the revolt which continued unabated. The situation grew so serious that Aurangzeb had to take the direction of operations in his own hands. He arrived at Hasan Abdal near Rawalpindi also called Panja Sahib in June, 1674.

Aurangzeb stays in the Panjab for 1½ years

During Aurangzeb's stay in Panjab, local officials persecuted the Hindu population and converted them to Islam in large numbers in order to win the approbation of the Emperor in whose mind conversion to Islam was uppermost. Sayyid Mohammad Latif writes: "The emperor had in those days thrown hundreds of Brahmans into jail in the hope that, if they first embraced the religion of the Prophet, the rest of the Hindus would readily follow their example."[2] In West Panjab and Kashmir proselytism was at its height.

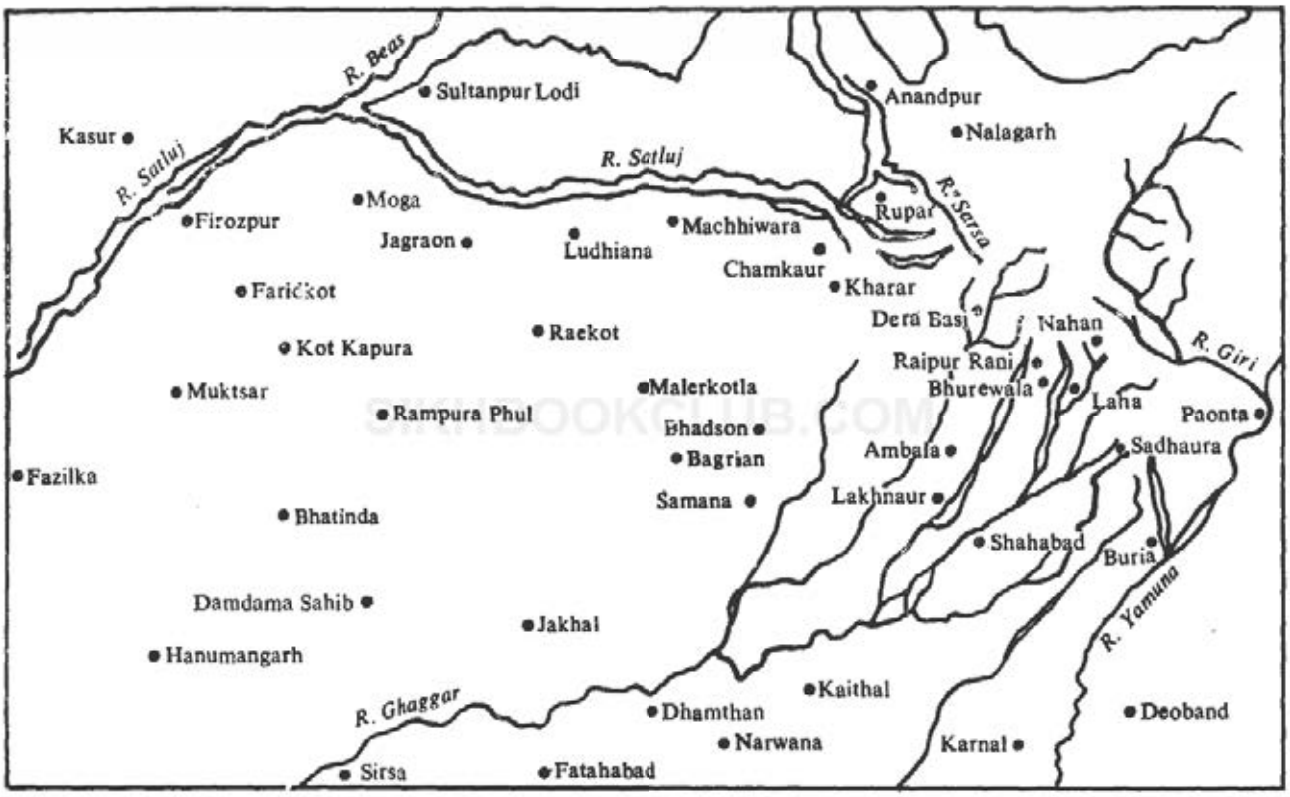
Tegh Bahadur's second Malwa tour, 1673-74

Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rae had converted a large number of Jats in Malwa to Sikhism.[3] The Sikhs of the Jalandhar Doab were under the influence of Dhir Mal who lived at Kartarpur. The Majha Sikhs were dominated by Harji, grandson of Prithi Mal, who had taken possession of Hari Mandar, the holy tank and other buildings. Hence Tegh Bahadur decided to concentrate on Malwa Sikhs.

The Guru knew that Shaikh Ahmad of Sarhind had played a leading role in the execution of Guru Arjan. Teg Bahadur made up his mind to cultivate personal relations with influential Muslim chiefs and Sufi saints of the region.

[1]Jadunath Sarkar, *A Short History of Aurangzib*, 133.
[2]*History of the Punjab*, 260.
[3]Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 34.

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Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh in Malwa

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In November, 1673, the situation on north-west frontier was critical. Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes:

"The danger to the empire was very great; the rising was a national one, affecting the whole Pathan land from Qandahar to Attock."[1]

The situation in the Panjab was alarming. The people were deeply perturbed. In this exigency Guru Tegh Bahadur visited important centres of Sikh *sangats* in Malwa. It seems he spent about two months from December, 1673 to January, 1674. He stayed with his family and some disciples with his friend Saif Khan, Nawab of Saifabad now called Bahadurgarh, situated near Patiala.[2] He held discussions with Sayyid Bhikan Shah of Ghuram, Hafizullah Khan of Garhi Nazir near Samana, and Ghulam Muhammad Bakhsh of Samana, and the Shaikhs of Hasanpur.[3]

Third tour of Malwa, 1674-75

In February, 1674, another great disaster befell the Mughal army. The Mughal general Shujaat Khan lost his life. His army was besieged by the Afghans. At this juncture Raja Jaswant Singh's 500 Rathors jumped upon the enemy, broke their cordon, and saved the remnant of the Mughal army. Aurangzeb himself took up the command in June, 1674. The fighting on the frontier, the Emperor's presence and the overzealous activities of the Mughal officers to win name and fame in the eyes of Aurangzeb, all this spread a wave of gloom and doom among the Hindus of the Panjab and Kashmir. The Guru decided to meet all his Sikh *sangats* one by one in the Cis-Satluj region. He left Anandpur after the Diwali festival in November, 1674, and travelled from village to village. The main theme of his sermons was:—

(i) *Bhai Kahun ko det nah*
Nahin bhai mānat ān
(Do not frighten anybody nor fear yourself.)

(ii) *Gun Gobind gayo nahin*
Jīvam akārath kīn
Kah Nanak Har bhaj mana
Jeh bidh jal ko mīn

[1]J.N. Sarkar, op. cit. 134.

[2]Nawab Saif Khan was the foster-brother of Aurangzeb, and real brother of Fidai Khan, the builder of Panjor Gardens, near Kalka and the Badshahi Mosque at Lahore. He was noted for his liberal views and religious tolerance.

[3]Macauliffe, II, 374; Trilochan Singh, 307.

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(You did not sing the praises of God,
And wasted your life in vain;
Nanak says, remember God,
As a fish remembers water.)

(iii) *Dhan, dara, sampat sakal*
Jin apni kari mân
In men kuchh sangi nahin
Nanak sâchi jân.
(Wealth, family, property,
All of which you consider your own;
None of them shall abide by you,
Nanak : this is the truth.

(iv) *Sab sukh dâtâ Râm hai*
Dusar nâhan kou
Kah Nanak, sun re manâ
Tah simrat gat hou.
[God is the giver of all happiness,
None else can do so;
Nanak says, hark my mind,
You will get salvation by meditating on His Name.]

As the Guru was meeting many of his disciples after eight or nine years, a number of men from every village followed him during his tours to listen to his sermons and to get his benediction. The Rabi crop had already been sown, and there was not much work to do in the fields. The Guru visited numerous places. To serve the congregations the village people voluntarily collected foodstuff, milk and clarified butter for the Guru's *langar*. The area was backward. In the Bhatinda-Hisar-Sirsa region rain was scarce. It was almost a desert in the absence of any irrigation facilities. The poor and ignorant but hardy and tough people cowed down by Muslim officials, particularly at this time when the Emperor was present in the Panjab.

The Guru tried to ameliorate the condition of the inhabitants with the money he had brought from Assam. He dug wells at places where there was scarcity of drinking water. Tanks were constructed to store rain water which was not to be allowed to go waste. He purchased cows and gave them free to poverty-stricken families. He got trees planted at suitable places. He spent nearly six months in this tour and returned in the middle of April when the peasantry got busy in harvesting. Attar Singh, chief of Bahadur, in his book entitled" *The*

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Travels of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh mentions some of the important places visited by the Guru.

Charges against Tegh Bahadur

Guru Tegh Bahadur's two visits to Malwa in 1673-74 and 1674-75 greatly alarmed the Mughal officials. They had been restless during Aurangzeb's presence in the Panjab. They wished to impress the emperor with their loyalty and devotion to duty. Malwa formed a part of the Delhi province. Reports of political activities in this region were directly sent to the emperor. The Government officials accused the Guru of having a large following, visiting every village, staying in the country for months together, exacting money forcibly from the people, and instigating them to revolt.

Sayyid Ghulam Husain of Lucknow wrote in 1782 that Guru Tegh Bahadur and Hafiz Adam, a disciple of Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, had collected a large body of men. They moved about in countryside and seized money and material by force. It was feared they might revolt against the government.[1] About this time the Sikhs had become supreme in Northern India. In June, 1781, Najaf Khan, the prime minister of the Mughal Empire, had confirmed the Sikh's right to *Rākhi* at 12.5 per cent of the standard land revenue in Haryana and the upper Ganga Doab. The Sikhs often plundered the territory of the Nawab of Oudh across the Ganga. Under these circumstances Ghulam Husain could not have, a good word for the Sikh Guru.

Ghulam Husain is obviously in the wrong in bracketing Guru Tegh Bahadur with Hafiz Adam. Hafiz Adam was banished by Shah Jahan in 1642, thirty-three years earlier. The Hafiz went on a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina where he died in 1643.[2]

Ghulam Husain's version was partially accepted by George Forster and Cunningham, while Syed Muhammad Latif fully endorsed it. We shall now examine this case in detail.

Was the Guru a plunderer?

Sayyid Ghulam Husain, the author of *Siyār-ul-Mutakhirin*, compiled

[1] *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin*, Persian, 401-2.

[2] Kamal-ud-din Ahsan, *Rauzat-ul-Qayumia*, 178; Nazir Ahmad, *Tazkirat-ul-Abidin*, 124-25; *Mirat-e-Jahan Numa*, 606; Ghulam Nabi, *Mirat-ul-Qwanin*, 417; Mirza Muhammad Akhtari, *Tazkirah-e-Hind-o-Pakistan*, 401; quoted by Ganda Singh in *The Sikh Review*, December, 1977, 6.

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this work which is a general history of India in 1782, more than a hundred years later than Tegh Bahadur's execution. He charged the Guru with plundering people. On the very face of it this accusation appears false and baseless. As a result of protest for demolishing the temples at Mathura in 1669, Gopal Jat of Tilpat was hacked to pieces. His womenfolk were reduced to slavery. Five thousand of his tribesmen were killed and 7,000 were taken prisoners.[1] In 1672 on the quarrel of a *satnami* of Narnaul with a Mughal soldier, 2,000 *sanamis* were killed in an engagement, and all others were so completely wiped out that not a trace of them was left in Haryana and Rajasthan.[2]

In the face of such terrible punishments, how could the Guru take to plundering under the very eyes of Auranzgeb who was then present in the Panjab, and while huge bodies of Mughal forces were constantly passing through the Panjab for the suppression of the revolt of the frontier tribesmen. The Guru possessed no resources in men, money and material. He was not a military leader. His followers were not large in number. Owing to Guru Har Rae's retirement to Nahan for twelve years, the childhood of Guru Har Krishan, and strong dissensions prevailing among them, the Sikhs were a completely disunited body.

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Harji, the grandson of Prithi Mal was in possession of Amritsar and asserted himself as the eighth Guru of the Sikhs. The Sikhs of Majha paid homage to him. Dhir Mal, a deadly foe of Tegh Bahadur, controlled Kartarpur and the Doaba Sikhs owed allegiance to him. Sodhis of Kiratpur and Guru Har Sahae had their own independent followers. Guru Tegh Bahadur himself was out of the Panjab for six long years, and so his influence was very much limited. The aim of his Malwa tour was to revive the religious fervour and devotion to God of those Sikhs who had faith in him. He went there to serve and not to plunder people. The Guru had become a man of the masses, one of the common people, and shared their joys and sorrows. He tried to solve their economic and domestic problems. By temperament also Tegh Bahadur was quiet, reserved and peaceful. In these circumstances Ghulam Husain's charge absolutely fails.

Ghulam Husain's contemporary was George Forster. Both were in the service of Warren Hastings, the first Governor General of India. He had employed Ghulam Husain to write a history of India. As the

[1]J.N. Sarkar, op, cit. 152.
[2]ibid, 153-54.

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Sikhs were the most powerful people in Northern India at the time, Warren Hastings had first engaged in 1776 Colonel Polier at Delhi to write an account of the Sikhs. Two years later he sent Major James Browne to Agra and Delhi to write a short history of the Sikhs. In 1782 he deputed George Forster to travel on horseback right across northern India through Panjab hills, Jammu and Kashmir and to inform him about the origin and growth of the Sikhs. He wrote his report about the Sikhs at Jammu in April, 1783. As regards Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution, he writes:

"The records of the Sicques say that Ram Rae still maintained a claim to the priesthood, and that after a long series of virulent persecution, he accomplished the destruction of *Taigh Bahadur,* who was conveyed to Delhi by an order of Court, and in the year, 1675, publicly put to death. The formal execution of a person, against whom, the Sicques say, no criminal charge was exhibited, is so repugnant to the character and actions of Aurangzeb, that we are involuntarily led to charge the Sicques of a wilful misrepresentation of facts, injurious to the memory of the prince, and extravagantly partial to the cause of their priest. No document for the elucidation of this passage appearing in any of the memoirs of Hidustan that have reached my knowledge, I am prevented from discovering the quality of crime which subjected Taigh Bahadur to capital punishment"[1]

Cunningham adopted the version of Ghulam Husain with a reservation. He observed: —"choosing for his haunts the wastes between Hansi and the Satluj, he subsisted himself and his disciples by plunder in a way, indeed, that rendered him not unpopular with the peasantry." Cunningham contradicts himself by saying that the Guru plundered the peasantry in such a way as to remain popular with them. The reference obviously is to the *langar* to which the people made voluntary contributions, but the Mughal officials considered them forcible extortions. So Cunningham's charge does not hold ground.

Syed Muhammad Latif who wrote 214 years later borrowed from both, Sayyid Ghulam Husain and Cunningham. He writes:

"Tegh Bahadur resolved upon the extirpation of the Sodhis, by whom he was looked upon as a usurper; but Makhan Shah persuaded him to put his sword in the sheath. He lived with splendour and kept in his employ one thousand armed horsemen. With the immense offerings of his disciples he commenced building a strong fort at

[1] *A Journey from Bengal to England*, 300.

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Kartarpur, where he established his ecclesiastical court—the Guru seems to have turned out a regular freebooter on his return to the Punjab. He is said to have taken to a predatory career, and to have laid waste and plundered the whole country lying between Hansi and the Sutlej."

Syed Muhammad Latif makes a number of baseless observations:

1. The Guru was determined to extirpate Sodhis. On the contrary the Sodhis were resolved upon Tegh Bahadur's destruction. An attempt was made to kill him, while the Guru forbade his men to take any action against them.

2. It was not Makhan Shah who persuaded the Guru to sheathe his sword, but the Guru who dissuaded Makhan Shah not to touch any Sodhi or their men.

3. One thousand armed horsemen in the service of the Guru is imagination pure and simple. He had no armed retainers. Where had they gone when the Guru was arrested at Malakpur without any agitation or commotion?

Not to speak of building a strong fort at Kartarpur the Guru seldom lived at that place, in spite of the fact that he was married there. He lived with his mother's parents at Bakala, and there he never built any mansion. Kartarpur was under the control of Guru's bitterest enemy, Dhir Mal.

5. The Sikh Gurus were the supporters and champions of the people. "A regular freebooter" could not be the head of a religious reform movement.

6. If the Guru had "laid waste and plundered the whole country lying between Hansi and the Sutlej," how could Sikh religion have struck its roots in this region? The people of this area recruited themselves in thousands in the forces of Gobind Singh and of Banda Bahadur to fight against Mughal tyranny and cheerfully laid down their lives in the cause of *dhaam* and truth. They would not have done so if they had been plundered and their homes had been destroyed. There is absolutely no truth in the statement of Syed Muhammad Latif.

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CHAPTER 11

Guru Tegh Bahadur's Martyrdom, 1675

Kashmiri Pandits' deputation

The Guru had hardly recovered from the fatigue and exhaustion of six month's tour of Malwa, when he was called upon to face a more serious and solemn problem. Nawab Iftikhar Khan was appointed governor of Kashmir in 1671. He was chosen by Aurangzeb to convert Pandits to Islam so that the common people might follow their example. His proselytizing activities terrified the Pandits. They were in search of a guide to help them. In the Deccan Shivaji was resisting the Mughal government. In northern India the revolt of Jats of Mathura under Gokal in 1669 had been crushed. In 1672 the *Satnamis* had been completely wiped out. The Pandit's very existence was at stake. In the Panjab Guru Hargobind alone in six hundred year's Muslim rule had provided military leadership to Hindus and Sikhs for the first time. The Pandits thought of waiting upon his son Guru Tegh Bahadur, A 15-man-deputation of Kashmiri Pandits under Kirpa Ram Dat of Matan arrived at Anandpur on 25 May, 1675.

An entry in the Bhat Vahi Multani-Sindhi states: Bhai Kirpa Ram beta Arhu Ram ka pota Narain Das ka parpota Brahm Das ka bans Thaukar Das ka Dat Gotra Mujhal Brahman bāsi Matan des Kashmir sammat satrā sau batis Jeth māse sudi ikādsi ke dihu Chaudhān Brahmanan gail gram Chak Nanaki Parganah Kahlur Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Mahal Nawan ke durbar ae faradi hua Guru Ji ne ise dhiraj dai bachan hoya tusan ki rakhsa Guru Nanak Ji karega.

[Brother kirpa Ram, son of Arhu Ram, grandson of Narain Das, great-grandson of Brahm Das, progeny Thaukar Das, Dat sub-caste, Mohyal Brahman, resident of Mattan in Kashmir, waited on Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru, on the eleventh moonlit day of Jeth 1732 Bikrami (May 25, 1675) with fourteen Brahmans in village Chak Nanaki, Parganah Kahlur. He represented their grievances. The Guru gave him consolation, and said Guru Nanak would protect them.]

This statement is corroborated by Sarup Singh's *Guru Kian Sakhian,*

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Sakhi No. 25, and Sewa Singh's Shahid Bilas.[1]

The Guru's heart melted at their tale of woe. He became uneasy and restless at the sad plight of innocent people. At this time 8½ year-old-Gobind Das appeared there. He innocently asked the cause of sadness of the Guru and the visitors. The Guru replied that the nation required a holy man to sacrifice his life. The child thoughtlessly remarked that there could be no holier person than the Guru' himself. It was enough. The Guru took the child's observation as God's word. His resolve was made. He informed the Pandits that they should tell the governor to convert Tegh Bahadur first, and they would follow his example.

Nomination of Gobind Das as tenth Guru, 8 July, 1675

Tegh Bahadur realized that his last hour had struck. Hence he nominated his son Gobind Das his successor by applying a *tilak* on his forehead and offering him five paise and a cocoanut at a formal ceremony. The Bhat Vahi says :

"Sawan parvishte āthven ke dihun Guru Gobind Das Ji ko Gurgaddi ka tika de ke Dilli ki taraf jane ki tayyari ki. Sath Diwan Mati Das, Sati Das Rasoya bete Hira Nand Chhibbar ke, Dyal Das beta Mai Das ka Jalhana Balaut āya.[2]"

[On 8 July Gobind Das was nominated by applying a holy mark, and (Tegh Bahadur) got ready to leave towards Delhi. He was accompanied by Diwan Mati Das, Sati Das cook, sons of Hira Nand Chhibbar, and Dyal Das son of Mai Das Jalhana Balaut.]

Aurangzeb's order

The Pandits went back and told the Governor who conveyed it to Aurangzeb at Hasan Abdal, situated close to the borders of Kashmir. The Emperor's mind was already prejudiced against Tegh Bahadur. He hated the word Sachcha Patshah used by the Sikhs for the Guru.[3] It implied that the Guru was a true king and the emperor was a false king. He also detested the word *Bahadur* in the Guru's name as this term was reserved for nobility of the Mughal court only. The report about Guru's activities in the Cis-Sathuj region had exasperated him. Aurangzeb, however, was most deeply offended by the Guru's support of Kashmiri Pandits. The only punishment for such people was

[1]Ganda Singh, *The Sikh Review*, December, 1977, 5-14.
[2]Vide Fauja Singh, op. cit., 92, 100.
[3]William Irvine, *Later Mughals*, I, 79.

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conversion or death. He knew no other course. He issued a *firman* to the governor of Lahore to arrest the Guru and keep him in prison until he was called at Delhi.

The Governor of Lahore passed on a copy of the imperial *firman* to Abdul Aziz Dilawar Khan, faujdar of Sarhind, with instructions to execute the orders in such a way as not to arouse any serious alarm in the region, and to treat it as most confidential. The faujdar instructed Nur Muhammad Khan Mirza, the Kotwal of Rupar, in whose jurisdiction Anandpur was situated, to arrest the Guru quietly and immediately send him to Sarhind.

The Guru arrested, 12 July, 1675

Muhammad Ahsan Ijad[1] quoted by William Irvine says that the order was kept secret for sometime. Obviously the Kotwal was waiting for a suitable opportunity. He did not like to carry out the orders at Anandpur, where a large number of Sikhs were always present. But he had employed scouts to inform him of the Guru's daily activities and programme. It was reported to him that the Guru had decided to go on a tour about the middle of July, 1675.

The Kotwal made preparations to do his job. A posse of police had been called from Sarhind to Rupar. A number of Ranghars from neighbourhood were kept ready for an emergency. The Guru accompanied by three devoted Sikhs, Mati Das, Sati Das and Dyal Das left Anandpur on 12 Sawan, 1732 Bikrami (11 July, 1675). After covering about 40 kms, the Guru halted for the night at Muslim village, Malakpur Rangharan, Pargana Ghanaula, near Rupar, and put up with his disciple named Nagahia. At about 3 o'clock next morning on 12 July, the Guru and his three companions were taken prisoners, and were hurriedly whisked away to Sarhind.

In prison at Sarhind, July-October, 1675

The Guru and his party reached Sarhind about 40 kms distant under a strong guard. They were kept in prison at Basi Pathanan, and were treated as criminals. They remained there for a little less than four months. The Guru's companions included Mati Das, a Mohyal Brahman of Kariala village in Jehlam district, 10 kms from Chakwal on the road leading to Katas Raj, his brother Sati Das, and Dyal Das, eldest brother of Bhai Mani Singh Shahid.The entry in Bhat Vahi

[1]Muhammad Ahsan Ijad, 'Fragment of the Farrukh Siyar Nama', in Irvine's *Later Mughals*, I, 79

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Multani Sindhi reads as follows:

Guru Tegh Bahadur Mahila nauwan——ko Nur Muhammad Khan Mirza, Chauki Ruparwale ne Sāl Satrān sai battis sāwan parvishte bārān ke dihun gām Malakpur Rangharan, Parganah Ghanaula se pakar ke Sarhind men puchāya, gail Diwan Mati Das, Sati Das bete Hira Mal Chhibbar ke, Dyal Das beta Moti Das ka pakra āya. Chār mās Basi Pathanan bandikhane band rahe. Dushtān Guruji ko ghanā kasht diya. Guruji ne bhāne ko māna.[1]

(Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru, was taken into custody by Nur Muhammad Khan Mirza of Rupar police post on 12 Sawan 1732 Bikrami) (12 July, 1675) at Malakpur Rangharan, Parganah Ghanaula and sent to Sarhind, along with Diwan Mati Das and Sati Das sons of Hira Mal Chhibbar, and Dyal Das son of Moti Das. They remained in jail at Basi Pathanan for four months. The brutes committed great atrocities on the Guru. The Guru calmly submitted.)

At Delhi, 5-11 November, 1675

The long period of Guru's imprisonment of nearly four months at Sarhind was necessitated by the fact that Aurangzeb was busy at Hasan Abdal and he wanted to come to Delhi, and personally coerce the Guru to embrace Islam. He seems to have reached Delhi before the beginning of Ramzan, the fasting month of Musalmans which commenced on 9 November, 1675. On his arrival at Delhi the Guru's presence was demanded at the capital. The faujdar put the Guru in an iron cage and fastened it on the back of an elephant. His companions were fettered and handcuffed, and were carried in a bullock cart to Delhi.

They were strongly guarded under the personal supervision of the faujdar of Sarhind. They reached Delhi on 5 November, 1675. They were kept in the Kotwali jail. Sir Jadunath Sarkar agrees that the situation on the frontier had eased to enable the Emperor to return to Delhi in the beginning of winter of 1675. He writes:

"By the end of the year 1675 the situation had sufficiently improved to enable the emperor to leave Hasan Abdal, and return to Delhi."[2]

While in the cage on his way to Delhi Guru Tegh Bahadur composed the following two quatrains:

[1]Harbans Singh, *The Sikh Review*, January, 1982, 41-43.
[2]Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *A Short History of Aurangzeb*, 137.

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Dohra no. 53

Bal chhutyo bandhan pare
Kachhu na hot upāe.
Kah Nanak ab ot Hari
Gaj jiyon hot sahāe.

[My strength is exhausted, I am in bondage, I have no resource. Saith Nanak, God is now my refuge. May He succour me as He did the Elephant!]

Guru Tegh Bahadur then gave the reply himself.

Dohra no. 54

Bal hoya bandhan chhute
Sab kuchh hot upāe.
Nanak sab kuchh tumre hāth men
Tum hi hot sahāe.

[Strength is there, bondage is broken. All the resources are there. Nanak! everything is in Thy power; You are my refuge.]

The Guru and his companions were imprisoned at different places. The Guru was told that his followers had been let off and they had gone home. In this situation the Guru composed two more quatrains.

Dohṛa no. 55

Sang Sakha sab taj gae
Kou no nibhyo sāth.
Kaho Nanak yeh bipt men
Tek ek Ragh Nāth.

[My associates and companions have all abandoned me. No one has remained with me to the last. Saith Nanak, in this calamity God alone is my refuge.]

He gave a reply in Dohra no. 56.

Nam rahyo Sādhu rahyo
Rahyo Gur Gobind.
Kauh Nanak eh jagat men
Kin japyo gur mant.

[The name remaineth; saints remain, Guru Gobind remaineth; Saith Nanak in this world, Guru's followers remain.]

Aurangzeb's pressure tactics

Syed Muhammad Latif writes: "The emperor had many religious disputations with Tegh Bahadur, and asked him to show miracles, if

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he was a true Guru, or to embrace Islamism." The Guru replied that showing a miracle was to interfere in the work of God which was wholly improper. As for embracing Islam he considered his own religion as good as Islam, and therefore the change of religion was not necessary.

The emperor ordered that the Guru be put to the severest tortures. After five day's persecution on 10 November, the most heinous and most horrible scene was enacted before the very eyes of the Guru who was kept in the iron cage. Aurangzeb thought that the sight of such ghastly deeds might force the Guru to change his mind for embracing Islam.

Sawing, boiling and chopping off

Dyal Das, Mati Das and Sati Das as well as the Guru were brought to the open space in front of the Kotwali where now stands a fountain. First of all Bhai Mati Das was asked to become a Musalman. He replied that Sikhism was true and Islam was false. If God had favoured Islam, He would have created all men circumcised. He was at once tied between two posts, and while standing erect, was sawn across from head to loins. He faced the savage operation with such composure, tranquility and fortitude that the Sikh theologians included his name in the daily prayer (*Ardās*) of the community. Dyal Das abused the Emperor and his courtiers for this atrocious act. He was tied up like a bundle with an iron chain and was put into a huge cauldron of boiling oil. He was roasted alive into a block of charcoal. Sati Das condemned the brutalities. He was hacked to pieces limb by limb. Jaita, a Rangret Sikh of Delhi, was also present disguised as a sweeper with a broom and a basket in his hands. He collected the remains of these martyrs and consigned them to the river Yamuna flowing at a stone's throw.

The Guru's reflections

All this happened before the very eyes of Tegh Bahadur. He was all the time repeating 'Wah Guru'. He knew his turn was coming next. He remained stonelike unruffled and undismayed. His energy, thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions had concentrated on Wah Guru, and dazzling divine light was beating upon his face. He realized that such immortal sacrifices could not go in vain. Their name would live for ever. In this carnage he saw the rise of a new nation of heroes. It was not the English nation as misinterpreted by some toadies but

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the Khalsa pure and simple, the Sikh warriors whose daring exploits and heroic deeds were to fill the pages of history later on.

At the end of this devil's dance the Guru was asked either to embrace Islam or show a miracle or face death. He offered to show a miracle the following day. On November 11, 1675, at 11 o'clock in the morning was the time fixed for the Guru's performance. Keeping in mind his promise to the Kashmiri Pandits, the Guru continually chanted the following hymn:

Bāhen Jināhn di pakaṛiye
Sar dije bāhen na chhoṛiye
Tegh Bahadur bolyā
Dhar payae dharma na chhoriye.

[Give up your head, but forsake not those whom you have undertaken to protect. Says Tegh Bahadur, sacrifice your life, but relinquish not your faith.]

The Guru's miracle

Next morning the Guru got up early. He bathed and sat in meditation. He recited the Japji and Sukhmani. He reflected upon the supreme sacrifice of his grandfather, Guru Arjan, on the duties of the office of guruship, and on his own responsibility at this crisis. His resolve was made.

A little before 11 O'clock Guru Tegh Bahadur was brought to the open place of execution in Chandni Chauk, where now stands Gurdwara Sis Ganj. The Qazi, several high officials, and the executioner, Sayyid Jalal-ud-din of Samana with a shining broad sword in hand were already there. A contingent of Mughal soldiers stood on guard. A large crowd of spectators had gathered outside the barricade. The Guru stood in front. The Qazi asked him either to show a miracle or embrace Islam or face death. Syed Muhammad Latif writes:

"The Guru said before the assembly of Omerahas that the duty of man was to pray to the Lord, but since he had been commanded by his majesty to show a miracle, he had resolved upon complying with the King's orders. He wrote on a piece of paper, which he said was charmed, and then having tied it round his neck declared that the sword would fall harmless on it, by the effect of the charm which was written upon it. The executioner was now summoned to test the miraculous charm. The blow was given and the head of the Guru rolled on the floor to the amazement of court."[1]

[1]Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of Panjab*, 260.

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Display in Delhi

After the execution Guru's head and body were placed on the back of an elephant and paraded into the streets and bazars of Delhi. They were kept at the Kotwali in Chandni Chauk after demonstration. Aurangzeb then ordered that parts of his body be imputated and hung about the city. "*Wajudash ra chand hisse namudah atraf-e-shahar-awezand.*"[1]

A desperate struggle

Jaita and Nanu, residents of Dilwali Gali in the city, held a meeting in the house of Nanu. They were joined by Uda, a resident of Ladwa in Karnal District, who was staying with Nanu. They resolved that such a thing should not be allowed to happen. It was suggested that Lakhi Labana was shortly to arrive with a few cartloads of cotton from Narnaul. He was a Sikh and his guidance should be sought. They waited for Lakhi on the road a few kilometres away from the city. They informed him about the whole affair. It was decided that the carts should be diverted from the side of the Red Fort to Chandni Chauk about midnight. On 11 November, it was Thursday and the fifth day of the moonlight. It means the moon will set by 8 o'clock, and afterwards there was pitchdark. Near Kotwali the speed of the carts would be slowed down without stopping them. The head and body lay at the gate. The watchmen wrapped in quilts were inside. Jaita slipped out quietly, picked up the head and fled away towards Sabzi Mandi. He tied the head in a sheet, fastened it on his back and covered his body in an old, dirty blanket. He made straight for Azadpur on the road to Sonepat. Nanu and Uda kept him company at a distance.

Lakhi's extraordinary deed

Lakhi's son and a servant lifted the body, hid it in cotton and rushed off to Raisina, and to their home in Rikab Ganj village inhabited

[1]Satbir Singh, *The Sikh Review*, January, 1975, p. 54.

"We have it on the authority of Ghulam Husain's *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin* that Aurangzeb himself ordered that Guru Tegh Bahadur be killed and parts of his body amputated and hung about the city."

Bad chand roz hukam-e-digar darbarah-e-Tegh Bahadur rasid kih ura kushtah wajudash ra chand hisse namudah atraf-e-shahar awezand."

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by *Bagaris* whose profession was to make stirrups of saddles in great demand in those days.

Lakhi put the body at a suitable place and piled all the wood, wooden articles, clothes, ghi available in the house, heaped up cotton on it, and then set fire to the house to avoid detection. The Bhat Vahi Jādavanslān says:

Lakhia beta Godhu ka, Nagahia, Hema, Hari bete Lakhie ke, Naik Dhuma beta Kahne ka Tumar Bijlaut Guru Tegh Bahadur ji Mahal nauwan——ki lash uthāe lāe——dāg dia Raesina gām men ādhi ghari rain rahe.

{Lakhi son of Godhu, Nagahia, Hema and Hari sons of Lakhi, Naik Dhuma son of Kahna, Tumar Bijlaut picked up the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur the ninth Guru and cremated it in Raesina village 12 minutes before dawn[1]}. Cremation at night is prohibited.

In the morning the entire staff at Kotwali was horrified at the disappearance of Guru's head and body. The police was immediately put on the alert, and a thorough search was made everywhere. Some horsemen rushed along the road to Sonepat, making enquiries from passers-by. Another posse of policemen hurried to Rakab Ganj. They found Lakhi's house reduced to ashes, and inmates bewailing and crying.

After two days the Guru's ashes were collected. They were put in a bronze pot, and buried under ground at that very spot. Gurdwara Rakab Ganj marks this site. Two shrines serve as memorial of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom. One stands at the best place in old Delhi near the Red Fort and the other at the most notable place in New Delhi, facing Rashtrapati Bhavan, the Parliament Houses and the Central Secretariat.

The trio's feat of strength and endurance

Jaita carried the head, Nanu and Uda served his escorts. One walked ahead and the other behind within sight of Jaita. They followed the paths through fields and bushes, greeting Hindus by Rām Rām and Musalmans by Salām. From Karnal they took the pathway to Pehowa, Ismailabad and Ambala. They reached Kiratpur on the afternoon of Tuesday, 16 November, 1675. They covered 320 kms in five days. Guru Gobind Das was immediately informed at Anandpur, 8 kms distant. He at once came to Kiratpur, and accorded a ceremonial

[1]Kartar Singh, op. cit., 37.

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reception to his father's head. He held Jaita in a tight embrace declaring *Rangrete Guru ke bete*. The Guru bestowed the same affection and honour on Nanu and Uda. The Bhat Vahi says:

"Jaita beta Agyā Rām kā, Nānu beta Bāghe ka, Uda beta Kheme ka pota Parme ka Guru ka sis pae Kiratpur Parganah Kahlur ae, sāl satrai sai battis Mangsar shudi Dasmi ke din, gyārā ko dāg diya Makhowal men.[1]

[Jaita son of Agya Ram, Nanu son of Bagha, Uda son of Khema grandson of Parma, brought Guru's head to Kiratpur in Parganah Kahlur on the tenth moonlit day on Mangsar, 1732. It was cremated at Makhowal on the eleventh]

Gobind Das performed the ceremonial cremation of the head on 17 November at a place where now stands Gurdwara Sis Ganj (Keshgarh Sahib). After the creation of the Khalsa Jaita was baptized by Guru Gobind Singh and was named Jiwan Singh. He was killed in the battle of Chamkaur in 1704.[2]

The effect of Guru's martyrdom

Hindus, Sikhs and Sufi Muslims in the Panjab were deeply shocked at execution of the Guru and his three brave companions. They were filled with indignation. A Sikh even made an attempt on Aurangzeb's life. On Friday, 27 October, 1676, the Emperor returned from Jama Masjid. He went for an airing in a boat in river Yamuna. When he alighted the boat and was about to get on the movable throne (*takht-e-rawan*) "an ill-fated disciple of Guru Tegh Bahadur" threw two bricks on the emperor, one of which hit the throne.[3]

Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution turned the tide of history of the Sikhs and of the Panjab. His son and successor Guru Gobind Singh reflected on the history of India as well as on the history of the Sikhs. Guru Nanak had described the rulers of his time as tigers and dogs. His great-grandfather, the fifth Guru, Arjan, was executed at Lahore. His grandfather, the sixth Guru, Hargobind, had been imprisoned in the Gwalior fort for twelve years. His father was beheaded simply because he happened to be the head of a religious body. There had been no change in the attitude of rulers as described by Guru Nanak even after two hundred years. After a most determined meditation on this state

[1]Fauja Singh, op. cit., 103.

[2]Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 37; Harbans Singh, *The Sikh Review*, January, 1982, 44-45, 55-56.

[3]Saqi Must-id-Khan, *Masir-e-Alamgiri* translation by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, 94.

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of affairs, the Guru came to the conclusion that if the king was bad, people must rise in revolt and follow the example of Shivaji (1628-1680). The greatest need of the time was to create a national army. Such an army was to be based on social justice. There should be no discrimination in the name of caste, creed or colour. The unpaid, unequipped and untrained army was to be inspired by feelings of patriotism and nationalism. He knew that human mind with such inspiration was capable of rising to the loftiest heights, and under proper guidance could work wonders. This objective was achieved by his creation of the Khalsa. Under the direction of the Guru, the Khalsa took up to the profession of arms. The down-trodden people who had lived for centuries under complete servility turned into doughty warriors. In the course of one hundred years they not only ended the foreign rule but also put a stop for ever to the foreign invasions from the north-west.

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CHAPTER 12

Guru Tegh Bahadur's *Hukam Namas*

The *Hukam Namas*, issued by the Gurus were written orders or requests addressed to various *sangats* or Sikh assemblies of certain places. Numerous *Hukam Namas* must have been despatched. Only 22 sent by Guru Tegh Bahadur are available at the present day. Many more may come to light in due course. Of the existing ones 7 were issued to the *sangat* of Banaras, 6 to Patna, 5 to Pakpattan, one to Mirzapur, one to Bhai Dyal Das and 3 to other persons, and one to Bhais Malla and Bagha.

They bear a certain sign or *nishān* or a few words in Guru's own hand writing to show their authenticity. This served the purpose of a seal and signature. They are written in Gurmukhi script in prose and in the running style called in Persian *Shikasta* or broken. The Sikhs considered the *Hukam Namas* sacred documents, and received them with great veneration.

The Hukam Namas are of great historical importance. They throw light on Guru's life and work. They tell us that the Guru undertook a journey to the eastern parts of India. At the time of the birth of his son, Gobind Das, the Guru was not at Patna. He addressed a number of *Hukum Namas*, to the *sangat* at Patna asking them to make suitable arrangement for the residence of his family. He stayed for a fairly long time at Monghyr. He invited various *sangats* to meet him there. He maintained close contact with various *sangats* through correspondence and messengers. The Guru asked the *sangats* to apply certain articles for his own personal use as well as for awarding to some distinguished Sikhs and for the *langar* and missionary work. The Guru says he was joined by a Raja (Ram Singh of Jaipur), but his name is not mentioned.

These *Hukam Namas*, are not dated. It is therefore difficult to determine exactly when they were written. Dr. Fauja Singh, the compiler of Guru Tegh Bahadur's *Hukam Namas*, by comparing records in *Bhat Vahis*, has tried to put them in a chronological order. He has

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placed the earliest *Hukam Namas* in April or May, 1666. To those letters addressed by the Guru to the congregations of Banaras, Mirzapur, Patna and Monghyr he has assigned 1667-68 and to those for Pakpattan 1671-75. Of the five letters addressed to Pattan, Fauja Singh has put two to 1671, two to 1672, and one either to 1673 or 1675. These *Hukam Namas* appear to have been issued on the occasion of Holi or Diwali to invite the devotees to meet the Guru. It is also clear that the Guru stayed at Dhaka, though there is no specific mention of it.

A brief description of those *Hukam Namas* is given below :—

1. *Mul Mantra* of Sikhism is given in Guru's handwriting.

2. Letter despatched to the congregation of Banaras addressed to Bhai Jawahar in charge :

The congregation is urged to take every care of Sridhar, to furnish him supplies of provisions, and on his recovery to send him to Patna. Congregation is blessed.

3. To the congregation at Banaras addressed to Bhai Jawahar Mal : The Guru acknowledged receipt of the offerings of Banaras *sangat* from Bhai Kalyan Das. Lord's blessings bestowed on the *sangat*.

4. To the congregation of Patna, addressed as Bhai (brother) collectively to 64 men and to a woman named Bebe (sister) Peri Bai: The Guru expresses joy for their spending money at the birth of Gobind Das. Each silver rupee spent carried the blessing of a gold coin. Congregation was blessed with increasing prosperity. A robe of honour was sent as a mark of appreciation, apparently for the headman.

5. To the congregation of Patna collectively addressed to 70 men and one woman Peri Bai: The Guru acknowledges receipt of the offerings of clothes sent through Bhai Mehar Chand and Bhai Kalyan Rae. Congregation is blessed.

6. To the congregation of Patna addressed to 43 men and sister Peri Bai: Blessings conveyed for service to Gobind Das. The camp equipment received from Bhai Raja should be sent to the Guru. The congregation should send also: One fine canopy with three screens and other things for the privy; 3 screens and one enclosure for the kitchen; one tent of five yards square; chamber equipment and screens. All these things should be given to Bhai Mula Mehra.

7. To the congregation of Banaras addressed to 16 men:

The congregation should give their donations to Bhai Jawahar who will convey them to Bhai Dyal Das. They will go to holy stores. This is the time to serve the Guru. The congregation shall be blessed.

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8. To the congregation of Banaras addressed to 17 men: The Guru acknowledges receipt of donations sent through Bhai Dyal Das. The congregation is directed to hand over whatever donations even to a *kauri* dedicated to the Guru to Bhai Dyal Das.

9. To the congregation of Banaras addressed to 13 men:

Rs. 80 of the offerings are received. Their offerings should be given to Bhai Dyal Das who will convey them to the Guru. This is the occasion to serve the Guru.

10. To the congregation of Banaras addressed to 10 men: Rs. 166 donated by the congregation are received from Bhai Dyal Das. The Guru conveys his pleasure and blessings.

11. To the congregation of Mirzapur addressed to 4 men:

Their offerings should be made over to Bhai Dyal Das. Offerings made previously have been received.

12. To the congregation of Patna addressed to 15 men and sister (Bebe) Peri Bai:

The Guru is at Monghyr. This is the time to serve the Guru. Tell the *masands* of your area to meet the Guru along with their congregations. We will inform you about the tent of our camp of Shahzadpur. Send 40 turbans of Bihar of the value of Rs. 2 each. The congregation will prosper.

13. To the congregation of Banaras addressed to 19 men:

Their offerings should be handed over to Bhai Dyal Das. He will send them to Huzur (Holy Presence). We are camping at Monghyr. All Sikhs should come there for blessings.

14. To the congregation of Patna, addressed to 45 men and Peri Bai:

The Guru will leave *Monghyr in Asuj*. Articles given in the list worth Rs. 70 should be sent immediately without any delay. The entire congregation should come to meet the Guru and seek his blessings.

15. To the congregation of Patna, addressed to 42 men and Bebe Peri Bai:

We are travelling with the Raja and have left our family at Patna. The Sikhs should render service. Their every paisa will be rewarded with a gold coin. This is the time to serve the Guru. Put up our family in a fine building. The Lord shall bless the congregation.

16. Addressed to Bhai Dyal Das, Bhai Ram Rae, Bhai Darbari, Bhai Ded Mal: We started 5 days ago. The Raja left 7 days ago. We have halted here to meet you. Travel day and night and reach here at

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the earliest. Take a fast horse and reach here within 24 hours. Do not delay even for 24 minutes. We are anxiously waiting for your arrival.

17. To the Sikhs of Pattan (Pakpattan in West Panjab), addressed to Bhai Batha:

The whole congregation should come to the Guru on the day of Diwali. The Guru shall cherish all.

18. To Bhai Batha and the entire congregation:

Come to meet the Guru. The Lord shall bless the congregation.

19. To the congregation of Pattan of Shaikh Farid.

Bhai Batha should come along with the whole congregation to the Guru's presence. They will be blessed.

20. To congregation of Pattan: Bhai Batha should come along with the whole congregation. Our blessings are bestowed on the entire congregation of Pattan.

21 To the congregation at Pattan:

The congregation is enjoined to come to the presence in the company of Bhai Batha. Now is the occasion to serve the Guru.

22. To Bhai Malla and Bhai Bagha:

Take care that no mule of the Guru's stables is lost.

Note by the scribe

Bhai Malla and Bhai Bagha should note that a mule and two bullocks of the Guru's stables have been stolen from Jamalpur by cattle lifters of Dhardeo. Dhardeo is in the Bakala area. The bullocks were recovered from the lifters. You are hereby charged to get back the mule. Now is the occasion for you to make up this loss. Our pleasure is on you.[1]

[1]Fauja Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur's Hukam Namas*.

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CHAPTER 13

Guru Gobind Singh's Early Life, 1675-1699

There are in this world men who are endowed by nature with infinite capacity for attaining perfection. In the days of peace they work for the solace of mankind, and strive to smooth the way for the chariot of progress. In times of calamity they suddenly rise up to guide the people, and give them an ideal, great and glorious. While putting that ideal into execution, they remain stoic to the shocks of adverse fortune. They endure untold mortifications and sufferings, but stick fast to their ideal, and cheerfully make supreme sacrifices. The grateful world would point to Guru Gobind Singh as one of such men.

His dreams and deeds wrought a wonderful change in his own generation in the religious, military and political life of the people. His personality was so fascinating, so bewitching, so dynamic, so momentous and so unforgettable that we are seized with wonder at the changes which took place in Panjab within one year and a half of his death. He was the greatest genius of his age. Whenever we touch that short life, as he died at the age of forty-two, we are at once brought into contact with a live wire. He was a meteor that consumed itself to light the world. He was luminous like the sun, and had conquered death.

There are two ethical ideals, the pleasant and the good. The man without discrimination chooses pleasure as the goal. He perishes in his effort to attain it. The man of wisdom examines both the pleasant and the good. He makes the latter the supreme end. He is never satisfied with the passing, finite things of the world. His hunger is for the infinite. The infinite is true (Sat), blissful (Shiva) and beautiful (Sundar). It is also the purest delight, the essence of beauty (Ras). This is within reach of all. The limit to a man's growth is his own vision.

Guru Gobind Singh strove after such an ideal. He had the best his time could offer in education and culture, in power and pleasure. He

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possessed a rare combination of so many excellences, supreme self-denial, marvellous intellect, superhuman will-power, great heart and limitless energy. He examined life and sought its real meaning and the true goal. He came to grips with this fundamental question. He realized his deep bond to humanity. He was moved by the sufferings he saw around him. He decided to help man find freedom.

Guru Gobind Singh was not destined to have peace in his lifetime. He was born in conflict. He was brought up in conflict. He lived in conflict, and he died in conflict. This conflict was not of his own making. It was an age of conflict. Conflict was thrust upon him by the force of circumstances, and he had full measure of it. It was a holy conflict. He aimed at regenerating a decaying people. He endeavoured to create a new nation. He planned to lay the foundation of a new society based upon justice and freedom of conscience. He designed to promulgate the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity.

At the age of nine Gobind Singh had his father sacrificed in the cause of religious freedom. Between the age of nine and thirty-nine, in thirty years he had to fight as many as twenty battles, nine before the creation of the Khalsa and eleven afterwards. He had enemies all around. He had little resources in men, money, and material. Within a week in December, 1705, he laid at the altar his mother and all the four of his sons. Besides, thousands of his devoted followers were launched into eternity. Eventually at the young age of forty-two, he shuffled off this mortal coil in the cause of freedom and in the service of humanity. Can there be a greater and nobler sacrifice than this? The legacy left behind by him was that of sacrifice, service, self-support and self-respect.

Bulleh Shah, a celebrated Sufi Muslim saint of Panjab was a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh. He pays a glowing tribute to the Guru thus:

"I neither say of the past; nor do I speak of the future; but I talk of the time of Guru Gobind Singh and declare openly:

That but for him all the Hindus would have been converted to a foreign culture and religion."[1]

Early life

Gobind Singh was born at Patna on December 22, 1666.[2] Guru

[1]Parkash Singh, Incharge Sikh History Research Department, Khalsa College, Amritsar, in *The Spokesman Weekly*, New Delhi, Baisakhi Number 1970, p. 41.

[2]Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, I, 6-7, gives December 29, 1668, as the Guru's date of birth.

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Tegh Bahadur named him Gobind Das. He lived there for about five years, and came to Panjab in 1672. He was brought up like a prince. He was taught Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi, Gurmukhi, Arabic, Arithmetic Granth and History by competent teachers. He was trained in horsemanship, in the use of sword and spear, bow and arrow, musket and matchlock. He hunted in the jungles around Anandpur. His maternal uncle Kripal recruited a small force of Sikhs for the protection of the young Guru. More and more daring young men began to visit Anandpur, and prolonged their stay to keep inspiring company of the Guru.[1]

Marriage with Jito, 1677

Mata Jito was the daughter of Harjas Subhikhi, a Khatri of Lahore. In those days early marriage was the rule. At the time of marriage Jito was seven and Guru was eleven. As going to Lahore two years after Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution implied imprisonment or death for the Guru, he founded a village called Guru Ka Lahore for the bride's party, 12 kms to the north-east of Anandpur, where marriage was performed in 1677. This village still exists under the same name. The *muklāwā* was performed at the close of 1688 when she had reached the age of puberty on Guru's return from Paonta to Anandpur. She sweetened the water of pahul at the creation of the Khalsa. She died at the age of thirty in the beginning of 1700. She was the mother of three sons.

Sometime after the execution of his father, the young Guru began to assert himself. An official newsletter of 1677-79 A.D. says: "News from Sarhind. Gobind declares himself to be Guru Nanak. Faujdars ordered to prevent him from assembling" (Sikhs).

Conflict with Kahlur

Anandpur was situated in the state of Kahlur later on called Bilaspur. Bhim Chand (1667-1712) was its ruler. There were several causes of friction between the Raja and the Guru.

1. Bhim Chand did not like the large Sikh gatherings and their warlike activities in the vicinity of his capital. His headquarters at Kot Kahlur stood about fifteen kilometres from Anandpur on the Naina Devi range at the north-western end.

2. A huge kettle-drum called Ranjit Nagara was installed at the gate of Gobind's residence. It was beaten regularly every morning

[1]Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, *Sri Guru Dashmesh Prakash*, 47–48.

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and evening as a symbol of sovereignty, and it echoed for miles around. The Raja objected to this practice. He declared that it was the privilege of the ruler alone. The young Guru paid no heed to his protest [1]

3. Meanwhile a prince of Assam whose parents had met Guru Tegh Bahadur and had sought his blessings for the birth of a son, came to Anandpur in fulfilment of his father's vow. He presented Gobind a baby-elephant, named Prasadi. The young elephant had been trained to perform various acts of service and devotion. He held a jug of water, washed the Guru's feet and then dried them with a towel. He wiped the Guru's shoes and arranged them properly for him to put on. He fetched an arrow discharged by Gobind. He waved peacock feathers in a knot over the Guru. At night he held two lighted torches and showed the way to Gobind. His fame spread far and wide, and many people came to see him.[2] The possession of an elephant was another symbol of sovereignty and it considerably enhanced Gobind's prestige.

4. About the same time a Sikh from Kabul, named Duni Chand, brought as his offering a costly tent to be used by Guru Gobind Das for holding a durbar. It was made of the finest silk fabrics having numerous pictures carved on it in threads of gold, and strings of pearls hanging all around. The flooring was covered with lovely Persian carpets.[3]

5. All this touched the pride of Bhim Chand. He could not tolerate a sovereign state springing up within his state. Besides, the Mughal Governors of Sarhind, Lahore and Jammu incited the Raja of Kahlur to nip the rising power of Gobind in the bud. They also frightened him of the wrath of the Emperor if the Guru was allowed to gain power.[4]

First Battle of Anandpur, 1682

The Raja decided to assert his authority over the Guru. He demanded the elephant and the tent on loan for a few days on the occasion of the betrothal of his son. His real intention was never to return

[1] *Akhbarat-e-Durbar-e-Mualla*, I, 1677–1679, quoted by Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, in *A Short History of the Sikhs*, 1, 65.

[2] Macauliffe, V, 4–5; Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, *Sri Guru Dashmesh Prakash*, 72.

[3] Amar Singh Sher-e-Panjab, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 30; Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, 70–71.

[4] ibid.

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them. Gobind knew it, and put off the Raja's agent on the plea that the donors had forbidden their lending to anyone else. Bhim Chand led an expedition against Anandpur, but he was beaten off. This took place in 1682 when Gobind was hardly sixteen years of age.[1]

Second Battle of Anandpur, 1685

Relations between Anandpur and Kahlur remained tense. Skirmishes frequently occurred between the two parties. Intrigues were going on to uproot the Guru from Anandpur and break his power. Bhim Chand formed an alliance with the Rajas of Kangra and Guler. The allies attacked Anandpur in the beginning of 1685, but they were repulsed.[2]

Raja Nahan's invitation, 1685

Cordial relations had existed between the Gurus and rulers of Sirmaur State since the time of Guru Har Rae who had lived at Nahan for twelve years. Raja Medni Prakash (1684-1704) knew of the feud existing between Anandpur and Kahlur. He invited the Guru to settle down in his State. The Guru was unwilling to leave Anandpur, but he was persuaded by his mother to accept the invitation.

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Why Sirmaur ruler invited the Guru

Inayat Khan in *Shah Jahan Nama* says in 1654-55 Shah Jahan sent Khalilullah Khan at the head of 8,000 soldiers to capture Dehra Dun from the Raja of Garhwal. Subhash Prakash, Zamindar of Sirmaur assisted him. As a reward the Emperor conferred the title of Raja on him and granted him some of the territory seized from Garhwal. The Sirmaur Raja supplied ice from the mountains floating down the river Yamuna to the royal household at Delhi. An abundant supply of ice was maintained from February to September every year.[3]

In the war of succession Dara Shikoh, eldest son of Shah Jahan, was defeated by Aurangzeb. Dara's son Sulaiman Shikoh fled to Garhwal mountains. Its Raja captured him and surrendered him to Aurangzeb. Having won the favour of the new Emperor, the Raja of Garhwal became anxious to recover his territory from Sirmaur. The

[1]Hutchison and Vogel, *History of the Panjab Hill States*, II; Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, 88-90.

[2]Ibid, 503.

[3]*E&D*, VII, 105-6.

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Raja of Sirmaur wished to safeguard his eastern border by keeping there the Sikhs who were opposed to Aurangzeb.

Reasons for Guru's shifting to Sirmaur

There were several reasons why the Guru agreed to leave Anandpur.

1. Anandpur was situated in Kahlur State. Its Raja claimed suzerainty and demanded tribute from the Guru who rejected the plea.
2. Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur opposed Guru's military activities of inviting young men to Anandpur and demanding presents of arms, horses and gold, and to the beating of Guru's Ranjit Nagara. The beating of drum was the privilege only of royalty and not of nobility.
3. Bhim Chand feared that the Guru might join his opponents, and thereby disturb the political relations among the hill rajas.
4. The Raja demanded from the Guru as a loan, an elephant and an embroidered tent, obviously to treat them as a tribute from Guru Gobind Das.
5. The Guru's condemnation of caste and his declaration of equality among all castes and classes touched the pride of Rajput princes of hill states.
6. A couple of skirmishes had already taken place between the Raja and the Guru, and a big battle was expected at any time. The Guru's mother and maternal uncle Kripal Chand, wanted to avoid it.

Marriage with Sundari, April, 1685

The Guru's mother, Mata Gujri, became mother after 33 years of her marriage. She was anxious to have a grandson as early as possible. In 1685 Ram Saran Kumra Khatri of Bajwara near Hoshiarpur offered his daughter, Sundari to the Guru. The bride and bridegroom were of the same age, 18 years. The poverty of Sundari's parents appears to have delayed her marriage. The ceremony was performed shortly after Baisakhi in April, 1685, and one month later the Guru left for Nahan. Sundari became the mother of Ajit Singh in 1686 at Paonta. After the Guru's expiration in 1708 she headed the Khalsa until her death at Delhi in 1747.

The Durbar at Toka, 1685

The Guru's camp consisting of about 500 soldiers, many Sikhs and a large number of poets, scholars and musicians, numerous horses, oxen, camels and elephants left Anandpur in May, 1685. They passed

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through Kiratpur, Rupar, Kharar, Ramgarh, Rani ka Raepur and Bhurewala. He encamped at Toka,[1] 6 kms away, situated at the foot of hills on the border of Sirmaur state. A couple of days later the Raja of Sirmaur came from Nahan to escort the Guru to his capital.

Kale Rae, the first Settlement Officer of Ambala District under the British in 1846 in his book *'Kitab-e-Sair-e-Panjab*, recorded that the Chauhan Rajput landlords (*raīs*) of Laha, Bhurewala, Panjlasa, Hamidpur and Chechimajra, all descending from a common ancestor owned eighty-five villages in Zamindari.[2] They were all Muslims and were generally called *Ranghars*. The most influential families resided at Bhurewala and Laha, the author's home villages. His ancestors controlled the finances of these *raīsān*. At Bhurewala they entertained Guru Gobind Das and his cavalcade. They had done so forty years earlier in 1645 when Guru Har Rae went to Nahan by the same route. At Guru Gobind Das's camp at Toka my ancestors supplied provisions and performed other ancillary services. At this place the Guru held a durbar and in recognition of their services conferred the title of Bhure Shahi on them. The Raja also by way of appreciation entrusted to them the management of the temple of Goddess Durga at Talokpur. The Raja of Nahan led the Guru to Kala Amb, Nahan and to Paonta.[3] A small gurdwara commemorates Guru's stay at Toka. A fair is held there every year, on the tenth day of Jeth (May)[4]

This event which took place during the reign of Aurangzeb had become so popular in East Panjab that the celebrated Sufi Saint Sayyid Bulhe Shah (1680-1758) immortalized it in his Kafi no. 65 thus:

Bhurianwale rāje kite,
Mughlān zahar piāle pite,
Sabh ashraf phiran chup kite

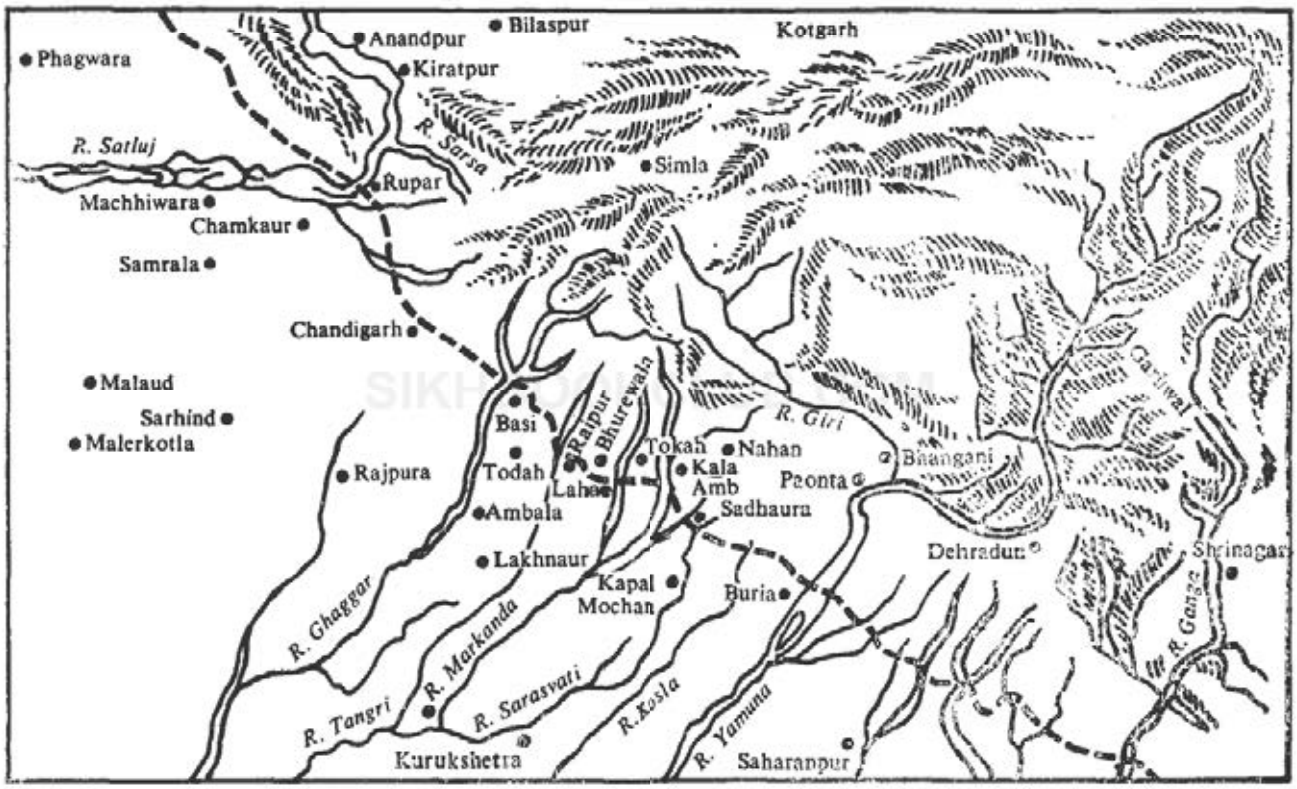
[1]Macauliffe is wrong in calling Toka a temple at Laharpur. *Sikh Religion*, V, pp. 29, 478.

[2]Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 114.

[3]Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 81-82.

[4]*Sirmur State Gazetteer*, 1904, Lahore, 1907, p. 15. The same Gazetteer further states on p. 15: The Sikhs have four gurdwaras in the State at Paonta, Bhangani, Nahan. "The fourth gurdwara is at Tokah, but it only consists of a small platform near a well, built by Fateh Singh Ahluwalia when he held the Naraingarh *ilaqa* in the later part of the 19th (Bikrami) century. About 100 bighas in the State are attached to the gurdwara, and it also enjoys a *muafi* in Naraingarh Tahsil and an annual grant of 100 *mans* of grain from Patiala. The income is appropriated by the descendants of the late pujari."

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to face p. 230]

Guru Gobind Singh in Shivalik Hills

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Bhalā unhān nun jharyāe.[1]

[The Bhurawale were made rajas, The Mughals drank cups of poison, all the good people roamed about in silence. May prosperity be with them !]

[While Guru Gobind Das was returning from Paonta to Anandpur in 1688, his camels had been stolen by the Muslim Rajputs (Ranghars) of Toda village. They were conveyed to their relatives at Laha, the present writer's birthplace. His ancestors recovered them and sent them to the Guru. Giani Kartar Singh Kalaswalia thus refers to this episode:

"Tode pind de Ranghar umt rāti
chori lai gae dharam hār de jī,
Lahe pind diyān jā labbe ditte khushi
lai ke janam sanwār de jī.[2]
Tota Tode nūn te lābh Lāhe tāin, eh sarāp var uchār de ji."

[The Ranghars of Toda village stole the camels in the night committing an irreligious act. They were recovered in Laha village which happily did the right thing.

Toda was cursed to suffer and Laha was blessed with prosperity.]

The Giani adds his own note:

"This benediction is true up to now. The people of Toda are starving and those of Laha are flourishing. There wealth, sons and milk are plentiful."][2]

Settles at Paonta

After a short sojourn at Nahan, Raja Medni Prakash suggested that the Guru should select a place on the eastern limits of the Sirmaur State along the right bank of the Yamuna which formed the boundary between Garhwal and Sirmaur. Medni Prakash wanted to use the Sikhs as frontier guards. The ladies of the Guru's family heaved a sigh of relief in getting a suitable place for them to rest and thanked Almighty for having given them a safe place to seat their weary feet (paon thān). Thus the place came to be known as Paonta. It is situated 43 kilometres from Nahan and 50 kilometres from Dehra Dun, headquarters of Ram Rae, the elder son of the seventh Guru, Har Rae.

Gobind built a fort at Paonta. Its foundation was laid on 22 Sawan Samvat 1741 (22 July, 1685). It was a romantic place for studies and

[1] *Sri Guru Dashmesh Prakash*, p. 125.

[2] Karam Singh, State historian of Patiala, also refers to this event in his book, *Jiwan Britant Maharaj Ala Singh Ji*, p. 252.

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contemplation as well. The Guru knew that poetry was a potent weapon in arousing the drooping spirit of the vanquished people. In this peaceful atmosphere and in the midst of enchanting natural scenery, Gobind Das resumed his literary pursuits. At Anandpur he had composed devotional songs called *japu* and *Akal Ustat*, and had translated from Sanskrit into Brajbhasha a portion of the *Markandeya Paurana* known as *Chandi Charitra Ukti Bilas*.[1]

At Paonta he composed *Shastar Nam Mala* giving an account of the weapons of the time. His next composition was *Var Sri Bhagvati ji*, popularly called *Chandi di Var*, dealing with the battles of Goddess Chandi fought in the cause of righteousness and justice. *Krishna Avtar* begun at Anandpur was completed here in July, 1688. Five Sikhs were deputed to Banaras to study Sanskrit.[2]

He frequently hunted in these jungles. He soon found a pleasant companion in his hunting expeditions. It was Lachhman Dev, a young Rajput still in his teens and 4 years younger than the Guru. He belonged to a village in the neighbourhood of Paonta. Both of them were marvellous hunters of tigers. wild boars and deer. These wild animals abounded in the lower Shivalak Hills. Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1764 hunted tigers in the Panjor-Sadhaura region.[3] In 1838 Lord Auckland killed six tigers in one hour near Kala Amb, 15 kms south of Nahan.[4] In *Bachitra Natak* the Guru says:

"I hunted bear, nilgae and tiger" in the jungles of Paonta.[5]

The scholars and poets translated into Hindi stories of heroism from *Ramayana, Mahabharata* and *Puranas*

The most notable scholars were Hans Ram, Chandan and Sainapat. Such was the poetic atmosphere at Paonta that even the Guru's groom Dhanna composed a verse in reply to Chandan's poem, and it evoked great applause in the Guru's durbar.

Ram Rae at Dehra Dun, 1686

Ram Rae was the elder son of the seventh Guru Har Rae. He was living at the court of Aurangzeb. The Emperor was using him against Sikh Gurus. After the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur he did not

[1]Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, III, Rut i, Ansu 47, p. 2339; Khazan Singh, op. cit., 162.

[2]Ramdat Bhardwaj, *The Sikh Review*, January, 1978, 52.

[3]Qazi Nur Muhammad, *Jang Nama*.

[4]Emily Eden, *Up the Country*, I.

[5]*Bachitra Natak*, Section VIII, Chaupai, 3.

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need him at court, and sent him to Dehra Dun to keep an eye on the activities of Raja of Garhwal. He granted him seven villages in the Dun lying between the Ganga and Yamuna. They were Chamasari, Dhamaval, Dhartanwali, Khurvadi, Mianwal, Panditwari and Rajpur. This valley or Dun later came to be known as Dehra Dun. There Ram Rae established a great centre of his own. It was called Dehra Ram Rae. His disciples were called Ram Payyas. He appointed *masands* to spread his religion and to collect offerings. The Raja of Sirmaur thought that Ram Rae's influence would be counteracted by Guru Gobind Das, and that his Sikhs would keep a check on the ambitious plans of the Garhwal ruler. The Raja of Sirmaur, therefore, decided to settle the Guru on the Yamuna river which formed the boundary between Sirmaur and Garhwal.

The Guru helped Panjab Kaur, 1687

To collect the offerings of his followers from his villages and other places Ram Rae had appointed *masands*. He failed to control them. Guru Gobind Das was then living at Paonta not far from Dehra Dun. He had two meetings with Guru Gobind Das in 1686 and sought his help. He said: "My *masands* are getting too powerful and headstrong. When I am gone, do protect my family and property from being ruined at their hands." A little later Ram Rae was in a trance. The *masands* declared him dead. Ram Rae's wife, Panjab Kaur, protested that it often happened before and he was alive. The *masands* cremated him and seized his property. This occurred on September 4, 1687. Panjab Kaur appealed to Guru Gobind Das for help. The Guru was still at Paon'a. He rushed to Dehra Dun, got hold of the culprits and recovered Ram Rae's property. They were warned of punishment for misbehaviour.[1]

Other activities

The scholars translated into Hindi stories of heroism from various Sanskrit works, particularly the *Puranas* and the Epics of *Ramayana* and *Mahābhārata*.[2]

Martial activities also received equal attention. Arms, horses and money were pouring in from all sides. One Sikh presented one

[1]Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 70-71; *Singh Sagar*, 86, 93; *Shahid Bilas*, 63-64, quoted by Gurbux Singh in *The Sikh Review*, January, 1977, 42.

[2]Amar Singh *Sher-e-Panjab*, 31.

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hundred horses which he had purchased in Kashmir.[1] Young men of dash and daring were retained in attendance. Five Pathan sardars of village Damla in Tahsil Jagadhari of Ambala district, not far from Paonta, were out of job. Their names were Kale Khan, Najabat Khan, Bhikhan Khan, Hayat Khan and Umar Khan. They were great warriors. Five hundred Pathan soldiers were with them. All of them were disciples of Pir Budhu Shah of Sadhaura, situated at the foot of hills, 16 kilometres south of Paonta and 42 kms east of Ambala on the Nakti Nadi. They were in search of employment. The Pir took them to the Guru. On the recommendation of the Pir, the Guru took them in his service. Each *sardar* was paid Rs. 5 daily, and each soldier one rupee.[2] They trained Sikh soldiers.

The Pir asked Gobind Das how one could meet God. The Guru replied as night met the day. The Pir said when night met the day, it did not remain night. Similarly, the Guru explained, one's ego was the obstacle in meeting God. On the disappearance of ego one met God. The Pir was satisfied.

The Battle of Bhangani, September, 1688

These warlike activities alarmed the hill Rajas. They were frightened of the growing power and popularity of Gobind Das.[3] The overwhelming number of his low-caste followers was a threat to their deep-rooted caste prejudices. Further the democratic spirit among the Sikhs was opposed to the feudal system and divine right of rulers in the

[1]Macauliffe, V, 29.

[2]Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, 104.

[3]Different dates of the battle are given by various authors. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh hold that this battle was fought in February, 1686. (*A Short History of the Sikhs*, 64, fn 1). Indubhushan Banerjee in his *Evolution of the Khalsa*, II 170 puts it in 1687. Kartar Singh in his *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 77, says that the battle was fought on April 16, 1689. Kahan Singh in his *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature* puts the date of this battle on 18 Baisakh 1746 (April 16, 1689). Sukha Singh's *Gur Bilas* assigns 1689 to it.

Guru Gobind Singh in his *Krishna Avtar*, 2390 says that the tenth chapter was completed by him at Paonta on 7 Shudi Sawan 1745 Bikrami (July-August, 1688). The Guru returned from Paonta to Anandpur immediately after the battle. Obviously *Krishna Avtar* was completed before the battle and not after it. The battle could not be fought in August owing to heavy rains and floods in these hills. Besides Hindu marriages were banned in rainy season. They began to be performed in Navaratras immediately before Dasahra in October. Hence the battle seems to have been fought in September, 1688. Prof. Harbans Singh of Patiala assigns it 18 September, 1688. *The Spokesman*, Guru Gobind Singh Number, 1982, p. 9.

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area. The taking as wives of pretty hill girls by Sikhs and Pathans was highly objectionable to them. They also felt that the Guru was trying "to establish a virtual principality amid mountain fastnesses to serve as the base of his operations against the Mughal Government." They were also under instruction from Delhi to crush the Guru.[1]

But the immediate reason was something else. The son of Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur was to marry the daughter of Fatah Shah, the Raja of Garhwal. It was a great diplomatic feat on the part of youthful Gobind to establish friendly relations with Ram Rae of Dehra Dun,[2] and Raja Fatah Shah of Garhwal, and thereby to bring about reconciliation[3] between Nahan and Srinagar, the capital of Garhwal.

The direct and shortest route to Srinagar from Kahlur passed over the river Yamuna near Paonta. The marriage party accompanied by a strong contingent of troops proceeded thither. Bhim Chand remained in the rear as he did not like to meet the Guru. His son Ajmer Chand, the bridegroom, with Wazir Parma Nand and the troops reached the ferry on the Yamuna. Their passage was obstructed by the Sikhs. Parma Nand waited on the Guru. The bridegroom's party with a small escort was allowed to pass, while the main body was turned away. Bhim Chand with them took a longer route. The Guru's earlier defiance at Anandpur coupled with that at Paonta invited BhimChand's wrath on Gobind.

The Guru also did not like to meet Bhim Chand. So he did not go to Srinagar, but out of friendly consideration he sent a present of one lakh and a quarter through Pandit Daya Ram under escort of Diwan Nand Chand with 200 chosen horsemen. At the time of marriage Fatah Shah's priest announced Guru's gift for the bride. Bhim Chand grew red with rage. He declared that outright rejection of Guru's present and expulsion of his men would enable him to have the nuptial ceremony performed, othewise he would immediately turn back without the bride.

The situation became tense. Fatah Shah was forced to yield. The Guru says that Raja Fatah Shah got angry with him and the battle was thrust upon him without reason.[4] Bhim Chand planned to plunder the party and kill all the Sikhs. Nand Chand got the hint. He took

[1]Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, 77.
[2]Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, 102.
[3]Macauliffe, V, 18.
[4]*Bachitra Natak*, Section VIII, Chaupai 3.

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possession of his gifts and fled away. Bhim Chand said the Sikhs had robbed them of both *khat* or dowry presents and *pat* or honour. This was an insult not only to him but to all the Rajas present there. The Guru was an enemy of their religion as he was opposed to idol worship. He persuaded Fatah Shah to lead an assault on the Guru in the company of all the Rajas. The bride and bridegroom under a suitable escort were sent straight to Kahlur. All others got ready for the battle.[1] It also appears likely that the Delhi Government had incited the hill Rajas to crush the Guru.

The hill Rajas who were present there and who assented to attack the Guru were the following:

Fatah Shah of Garhwal, Bhim Chand of Bilaspur, Kripal Chand of Kangra, Sidhsen of Mandi, Gopal Chand of Guler, Hari Chand of Hindur, Kesari Chand Jaswal, Umed Singh of Jaswan, Dyal Chand of Kotgarh, Karam Chand of Bharmaur, Daya Singh of Nurpur, Gurbhaj Singh of Indaurah, Bhag Singh of Talokpur, Hari Chand of Kotiwal and Lachhu Chand of Kotkhai. Raja Medni Prakash of Sirmaur remained neutral, though the battle was to be fought in his territory.

To begin with they tried to seduce the Pathan mercenaries in the service of the Guru. There were five Pathan chiefs each in command of one hundred horsemen. Kale Khan did not agree, while the other four deserted the Guru. Kale Khan was also considered undependable and was let off. The Guru sent a word to Pir Budhu Shah about the treachery of men recommended by him. The Pir was incensed. He immediately brought 700 soldiers and put them under his four sons. They were designated as Risaldars. Each horseman was paid Rs. 30 per mensem, and every Risaldar received Rs. 100 p.m. The Udasis had no families and no homes. They offered their services to the Guru and were permitted to take the field.

The enemy crossed the Yamuna a few kilometres above Paonta. Gobind intercepted them in the valley of Bhangani 10 kilometres north-east of Paonta on the bank of Giri,[2] a tributary of the Yamuna. The Guru took up his position on a hillock. The hill troops occupied the plains below. The fighting was tough and hard. The Guru gives a vivid description of the battle, several skirmishes and the duels. In an engagement the Guru's horse was killed by an arrow of Hari Chand

[1]Kalaswalia, 110-13.

[2]This river is called Kalindri by the Guru.

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of Hindur. Another arrow grazed his ear, while the third penetrated the buckle of his waistbelt and pricked his body. Most of the Udasis in the thick of the battle disappeared in the jungles. The Guru's general and cousin Sango Shah with his four brothers Jitmal, Gulab Rae, Sangat Rae and Hari Chand, all of whom were the sons of Bibi Viro, daughter of Guru Hargobind, fought hard. Sango Shah killed Najabat Khan. Pir Budhu Shah's two sons and Sango Shah were killed. On the side of the hill rajas Hari Chand of Hindur was killed by the Guru. Fatah Shah and Bhim Chand took to flight. The Udasi saint Kripal killed Hayat Khan. Rama carpenter of Chandalgarh had prepared two guns in the hollow trunks of two *imli* (tamarindus indicus) trees. Their smoke and dust of the earth created darkness and enabled Guru's men to fall upon the enemy. Mul Chand, a confectioner in Guru's camp, fought bravely.[1]

The Guru describes how he was attacked by the enemy.

Tritya ban maryo su peti majhāran.
Chubhi chūnch chamran,
Kachhu ghae na āyam,
Kalan kevlam jān dās bachāyan.[2]

[The third arrow struck my belt. Its sharp point pierced into my skin, but it did not cause a wound. The Almighty God saved the life of His servant.]

Then the Guru took up his bow and struck an arrow to a Khan who fell dead. Another arrow was aimed at Bhikhan Khan who fled away, leaving his horse behind. A third arrow killed him. He discharged volleys of arrows on the enemy.

The battle was fought for about nine hours. By nightfall the enemy troops were nowhere to be seen. The Guru's Sikhs had done a good job. They had displayed great skill in sabring, slashing, slaughtering and shooting. The dead bodies on both sides were thrown into the river. The wounded were taken care of. With the beat of drum the victorious Guru returned to Paonta which was illuminated. Pir Budhu Shah was granted a robe of honour.[3]

[1]Kalaswalia, calls him Lal Chand, pp, 118-19.

[2]*Bachitra Natak*, 8: 30. The attackers were Pathan deserters from Guru's camp.

[3]Gobind Singh. *Bachtra Natak*, Section VIII, Chaupais 7-22, 29-35, Dohra 23; *Sirmur Gazetteer*, 15; Kanhiya Lal, *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, 44-49, 57; Kalaswalia, 113–24.

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Importance of the battles

1. Having defeated a combination of hill rajas at the age of 22, it led to self-reliance of the Guru and his Sikhs.
2. It raised the prestige of the Guru considerably. He was now fully prepared to hold his own at Anandpur.
3. It showed that Udasis and mercenaries could not be depended upon.
4. It exposed the hollowness of the prowess of hill rajas.
5. It convinced the hill rajas that they could not evict the Guru from Anandpur without the support of the Mughal government.
6. It paved the way for Mughal-Sikh conflict[1].

Back to Anandpur, December, 1688

In the battle of Bhangani the Raja of Sirmaur had remained neutral. This created suspicion in the mind of the Guru. It seems that the Guru's victory had perturbed him. He feared lest the Guru should seize his state. Gobind Das had no such idea. There was some doubt that the Raja of Garhwal might join Nahan in a fresh expedition against the Guru.[2] On the other hand the young Guru was yearning for Anandpur. He was confident that in case of further trials of strength by Bhim Chand he would be able to hold his own. The Guru was in the habit of taking quick decisions and executing them instantly.

He dispersed his camp at Paonta in October, 1688. He attended Kapal Mochan fair held at Bilaspur 13 kilometres north of Jagadhari on the full moon day in Kartik (28 October, 1688). From there the Guru came to Sadhaura to console Pir Budhu Shah's wife for the death of her sons. He pitched his tents at Laharpur[3] where he stayed for thirteen days. Here Budhu Shah met him a number of times, and the Raja of Nahan also called on him. The Guru had sent his troops in advance to Anandpur, and he remained behind with a small bodyguard hunting and sporting in the jungles.

[1] *A Journey from Bengal to England*, 1970, p. 301.

[2] Kartar Singh, *Life af Guru Gobind Singh*, 7.

[3] Laharpur is 15 kilometres from Laha near Sadhaura.

Kartar Singh is also mistaken in stating that the Guru stayed at Toka on his way back from Paonta. On his return journey the Guru visited Sadhaura and Laharpur. From there a straight road runs via Naraingarh, Laha, Bhurewala to Rani ka Raepur. Toka remains 6 kilometres to the east below the hills. *Guru Gobind Singh*, 81–82.

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From Laharpur the Guru proceeded via Naraingarh, Laha and Bhurewala to Raepur Rani, 22 kilometres from Sadhaura. Here he was warmly received by the Rani who was acting as regent for her minor son. She offered the Guru Rs. 1,100 and a horse and entertained him for two days. It was here that the Ranghars of Toda[1] village stole Guru's camels in the night and passed them on to their relatives at Laha where under influence of author's ancestors they were restored to the Guru. Two gurdwaras were built at Raipur, one outside the fort where Guru Gobind Das had pitched his tent, and the other inside the fort where the Guru dined as the Rani's guest. The Guru returned to Anandpur by way of Rupar and Kiratpur.

THE BATTLE OF NADAUN, 1690

The Guru's arrival at Anandpur did not disturb the equanimity of the Rajas of Kangra hills. Finding Aurangzeb too heavily involved in the Deccan, the Rajas wished to stop payment of their tribute. A coalition was formed under the leadership of Bhim Chand. His allies were Gopal Chand of Guler, Ram Singh of Jaswan, Prithvi Chand Dadwal, Kesari Chand Jaswal and Sukhdev of Jasrota. Guru Gobind Das was won over to their side. Forster says that on his return the Guru "was hospitably received by a marauding Hindoo chief of that quarter.[2]" To avoid listening to the beating of Guru's drum and to be farther away from the Sikhs and the Mughals. Bhim Chand shifted his capital into the interior on the left bank of the river Satluj, 2,000 feet above sea level. He named it Vyaspur after the name of the famous sage Vyas or Bias. It became corrupted into Bilaspur. The state also came to be known by the same name.

The Kangra hills were under the charge of the Governor of Jammu. At this time Mian Khan held this post. He despatched a force under Alif Khan in 1690. He took up position at Nadaun on the banks of river Beas 32 kilometres south-east of Kangra. Raja Kripal Chand of Kangra and Raja Dyal of Bijharwal joined Alif Khan. After a hard battle the allies were successful and Alif Khan took to flight leaving behind all his baggage. The Guru stayed here for eight days and visited various palaces of the place. Meanwhile Bhim Chand made peace with Kripal Chand of Kangra without consulting the Guru, and agreed to pay tribute to the Mughal Court. The Guru left for Anandpur in disgust. On the way his followers plundered Alsun. Macauliffe

[1]Toda is situated 15 kilometres south-west of Raipur.

[2]*Bachitra Natak*, Section IX, Chaupais 1-24, Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, Harnam Singh 15-16.

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says that the inhabitants had refused to sell supplies to the Sikhs.[1]

Rustam Khan's Expedition Against Anandpur, 1691

On the repulse of Alif Khan and the submission of hill rajas, Mian Khan, the Governor of Jammu, reported to the Governor of Lahore, to take suitable action against the Guru who alone remained defiant in the region. His deputy Dilawar Khan sent a force under his son Rustam Khan. The expedition seems to have been organised in the winter of 1691. The young man wanted to take Anandpur by surprise. He arrived at night opposite Anandpur and encamped in the bed of a dry nullah. By chance it rained heavily and the rivulet was flooded. Many of his men and most of his baggage were carried off. The Guru called it Hamayati Nullah or friendly rivulet.[2]

In those days and even today the Guru's drum was beaten at 3 o'clock in the morning to awaken the Sikhs so that they were ready for prayers by 4 o'clock. Many Sikhs were in the habit of having a dip in the river Satluj, which then flowed one km away. They saw a concentration of Mughal troops. They rushed back to inform the Guru. He lost no time in reaching the spot at the head of a strong force.

The Sikhs delivered a vehement attack on the enemy. There was bitter fighting. The guns on both sides played a havoc. On account of extreme cold and the sudden attack, the Mughal soldiers could not hold their ground and fled away leaving behind their weapons. On their way back they plundered and laid waste the village Barwa in Thana Nurpur, Tahsil and District Una, and encamped at village Bbalan in the same police station.[3]

The Husaini Battle of Guler, 1693

Dilawar Khan despatched a stronger expedition under Husain Khan in the beginning of 1693. The Mughal general expected a long siege of Anandpur. For that purpose he needed ready money. In internal expeditions the general rule was that war must be made to pay for war. Husain Khan also wished to secure his rear in order to maintain a constant source of supplies. These objectives involved him inextricably with the hill chiefs. On the way he defeated Madhukar Shah,

[1] *The Sikh Religion*, V, 54.

[2] Kalaswalia, 137.

[3] *Bachitra Natak*, Section x, Chaupais 1-10; Kalaswalia 137; Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, 17.

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the Raja of Dadwal and took his sons prisoners. He plundered the the whole country in the neighbourhood unopposed. Kripal Chand Katoch of Kangra and Bhim Chand of Bilaspur submitted to him without offering any resistance. Their example was followed by Raja Gopal of Guler and Raja Ram Singh of Jaswan. Husain Khan demanded money from the Rajas in order to subdue the Guru. They offered him certain amounts which were considered too small. The Raja of Guler had brought Rs. 4,000 instead of Rs. 10,000 claimed from him. Being publicly insulted the Raja fled back along with the money he had brought. Raja Gopal's fort was besieged.

By this time the Guru had sent his agent named Sangat Rae to help Raja Gopal in negotiations. At his suggestion and on Husain Khan's assurance of safety, Raja Gopal Chand visited Husain Khan. Kripal Chand Katoch was his enemy. He prevailed upon Husain Khan to take him prisoner. Raja Gopal managed to flee. A bloody battle was fought. On one side were Husain Khan, Kripal Katoch, Bhim Chand, Himmat Singh and Hari Singh. Raja Gopal was helped by Guru's commanders Lal Chand, Ganga Ram, Kripa Ram, and Agri Singh Brar with 300 chosen soldiers, and Raja Ram Singh of Jaswan. In the action Husain Khan, Kripal Katoch and Himmat Singh were killed. Agri Singh and Sangat Rae with seven Sikhs also perished. Gopal made large offerings to the Guru who remained safe as Anandpur was not attacked. The Guru calls it the Husaini battle in *Bachitra Natak*,[1] and concludes the account thus:

"Victory was won and the battlefield was left deserted. Talking about the fighting all went home. God Almighty saved us. He made the clouds of lethal blows burst upon the enemy."

Two Battles of Anandpur, 1694-96

On November 20, 1693, Aurangzeb was informed that Guru Gobind Das had been creating trouble in the province of Sarhind and that local authorities had failed to subdue him. Aurangzeb issued orders to his governors of Delhi, Sarhind, Lahore and Jammu to stop the Guru from collecting Sikhs at Anandpur. A newsletter stated:

"News from Sarhind. Gobind declares himself to be Guru Nanak. Faujdars ordered to prevent him from assemblage."[2] A special order

[1] *Bachitro Natak*, Section XI, Chaupais, 1-69; Kalaswalia, 134-41; Sainapat, *Sri Gur Soabha*, p. 18.

[2] *Akhbarat-e-Darbar-e-Mualla*, I, 1677, 1699, quoted by Teja Singh and Ganda Singh in *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, 65, fn. 2.

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was issued to the Governor of Sarhind "to admonish Gobind son of Tegh Bahadur."[1]

In consequence a number of expeditions were planned between 1694 and 1696, but all of them failed to achieve anything. In the absence of any definite details we put their number at two only.

Jujhar Singh's Operation, 1697

The Emperor was exasperated. In the Deccan Raja Ram, the younger son of Shivaji had made life hard for him. In the north he was expecting the same stiff resistance from Gobind Das. In order to secure the most reliable report about the Guru, Aurangzeb despatched Jujhar Singh, a Rajput prince. His deputy was Chandan Rae. They joined Rustam Khan, representative of Dilawar Khan, the faujdar of Kangra. Gaj Singh Jaswal was commissioned by the Guru to intercept this force. He lay in ambush, and finding his prey near attacked them at Bhalan village in Thana Nurpur of Una district and drove them away. In a desperate fight both the Rajas, Jujhar Singh and Chandan Rae were killed. The enemy failed to reach Anandpur, and retired to Lahore.[2]

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Prince Muazzam's march into the hills, 1698

On the failure of Mughal officers to subdue the Guru and the hill rajas, Aurangzeb ordered his son Muazzam to lead an expedition against them. Prince Muazzam, later Emperor Bahadur Shah, was born in September,[3] 1643. He was imprisoned by Aurangzeb in 1686 and was set free in 1691. He remained Viceroy of North-West region including Panjab and Afghanistan from 1696 to 1699.[4] He resided at Kabul and occasionally visited other provinces. In *Bachitra Natak* the Guru writes:

"Aurangzeb got angry and sent his son to Madra Desh (Panjab). On his arrival all the people were alarmed and hid themselves in lofty mountains. The people greatly frightened me. They did not understand the mystery of death. Many deserted me. They stayed in high hills. The cowards' minds were very much terrified. They did not know where their safety lay. At this Aurangzeb's son was inwardly agitated. He sent a bailiff (*Ahdiya*) in this direction. He demolished

[1] Sri Ram Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, 146.
[2] *Bachitra Natak*, Section XII, Chaupais 1-12.
[3] Saqi Mustid Khan, *Maasir-e-Alamgiri*, 293, 341.
[4] Irvine, *Later Mughals*, I, 4.

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the habitations of disloyal persons who had left me.[1] In Chaupais 5 to 8 the Guru curses those who proved treacherous to him. They would suffer both in this world and the next, and would go to hell.

Putar pautar tin ke nahin phire,
Dukh de māt pitā ko mare.
Guru dokhi sag ki maritu pāwe,
Narak kund dāre pachhtāwe.[2]

[Their sons and grandsons will not prosper; They will die causing grief to their parents. The traitors to the Guru will die dog's death, They will fall into the pit of hell and suffer.]

He says that they would be punished by the Mughal emperors:

"The successors of Baba (Nanak) and Babar are distinct. God Himself has created them. These should be recognised as the kings of dharma and those to be considered masters of the world."[3] The Guru further wrote:

"This bailiff's name was Mirza Beg. He had demolished the houses of disloyal persons to the Guru. God Himself saved all his true followers. Not a hair of them was touched. Then Aurangzeb's son's anger flared up. He sent four more bailiffs to Panjab. They destroyed the homes of those unfaithful Sikhs who had escaped the fury of Mirza Beg."[4]

The account given by the Guru shows that the Prince left him unmolested and he punished those hill rajas who had defided the imperial authority and had seized the Guru's property while deserting him. Certain factors seem to be responsible for the peace established between the Prince and the Guru. In the first place Muazzam had faith in saints whether Hindu or Muslim and did not like to offend them. On the contrary he believed in their blessings. The Prince considered the Guru as a *Darvesh* as he later on declared in one of his *firmans* or royal rescripts. Besides he had seen the Guru's vast resources in men and material. He knew that Guru's young disciples made good soldiers who were ever ready to lay down their lives at his bidding. Emperor Aurangzeb was then very old. The struggle for the throne

[1] *Bachitra Natak*, Section XIII, Chaupais 1-4.
[2] Nanak Chand Nāg, nos. 181, 182, p. 152.
[3] Babe ke Babar ke do-u
Ap kare Parmesar so-u
Din Sah in kau pahchano
Duni pati un kau anumano
[4] *Bachitra Natak*, Section XIII, Chaupais 9-25.

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was imminent and he was keen on securing Guru's spiritual, material and military help. Nand Lal Goya, a Persian poet attached to the Guru's literary staff had formerly been in the service of the Prince. He seems to have wielded his personal influence with the Prince in favour of the Guru. Besides the Prince thought that a liberal treatment of the Guru might result in making him a peaceful subject of the empire. The Guru took it for granted that his independence in matters spiritual had been tacitly admitted, and the Government would not interfere with his religious activities.

Fortification of Anandpur

The Guru was in perpetual danger from hill rajas and the Mughal governors. He wanted to live in peace, but he was determined to take defensive measures. For that purpose he erected five forts all around the town: Keshgarh at centre, Anandgarh (fort of bliss) 500 metres to the east, Lohgarh (fort of steel) one kilometre to the south, Holgarh (fort of colour) one and a half kilometres in the west, Fatahgarh (fort of victory) one and a half kilometres to the north. Anandgarh and Keshgarh were built on hill tops. All were located at strategic places. Fatahgarh, Holgarh and Lohgarh were situated on the banks of Charan Ganga. All the forts could take big guns. They were joined together with skilfully constructed earthworks and underground tunnels. The construction began in 1689 and took ten years to be completed. The strongest fort was Anandgarh. It still exists. For water supply a huge well was dug up. It was worked by a Persian wheel. The well and the wheel are still there. He also set up an arsenal in it.[1]

Hola Mohalla

The Guru gave training to his Sikhs in defensive warfare. A large gathering had arrived at Anandpur on the occasion of Holi. The Guru gave preliminary directions in the art of defence. Afterwards the assembly was divided into two parts. One section took up position in the Holgarh fort and dug in for defence against attack. The other under command of the Guru delivered the assault. In front of the attacking party were the standard bearers. Another flag was flying on the fort. The Sikhs were divided into various battalions. It was a mock battle fought without arrows and bullets. The garrison was dressed in white, while the assailants wore yellow clothes. The fighting lasted

[1] *Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 173; Kalaswalia, 130, 145.

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four and a half hours. Eventually the fort was captured. The attacking force employed many tactics of warfare. War drums were beaten. The soldiers on horseback from both sides yelled and rushed upon their opponents. A number of prisoners were taken by both parties.

Afterwards a *durbar* was held, and the Holi was played with great glee. *Gulal*, rose water, and saffron water were freely thrown on one another with pistons (*pachkaris*). Huge quantities of *karah prasad* (sweet pudding) worth Rs. 5,000 had been prepared. It lay in a grassy ground in huge pans. The Guru ordered the Sikhs to plunder it. All at once an assault was delivered on the delicious pudding. Many pushed one another to get at it. Some rolled on the ground to the laughter of all. In a moment the entire quantity was gone. The Guru also participated in the game. He called it *Mai Halla* or a petty fight. Later on it became popular as Hola Mohalla.[1]

On this occasion Bhai Nand Lal a poet of Persian with Goya as pen name composed a poem, a free translation of which is given below:

Many have written about the flower of Holi in the garden of the world. It made the lips beautiful like a flower bud. Rose water, amber, musk and saffron water fell like rain from all sides. The scattering of *gulal* by the blessed hand (of the Guru) reddened the earth and sky. The pistons filled with saffron-coloured water imparted lovely tinge to the uncoloured. (*Har be rang ra khushrang-o-bû kard*). When my king (*Shaham*) wore the coloured neck cloth, both the worlds became happy through his kindness. One who happened to see his divine face, achieved the objective of his life. Goya's heart has only one desire that he should sacrifice himself on the dust over which the Guru's devotees pass.

The Nihangs have preserved the memory of this day's mock battle. They celebrate Hola Mohalla at Anandpur on the following day after Holi. They put on deep blue robes, tall conical turbans, yellow girdles, and enact the mock battle. Riding on horses with sparkling spears and swords and shouting their war cries, they march in a procession. On the way they stop for a while to display fencing and wrestling.

Peaceful pursuits

The Guru wished to develope the spirit of discipline, adventure and courage among his Sikh.

The Guru declared:

[1] *Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 225-26.

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Rahit piyāri mohi kau
Sikh piyārā nāhi
[I love disciplined conduct, I am not enamoured of a Sikh.]
He asserted:
Rahni rahe soi Sikh merā
O Sahib: main us kā cherā
[One who leads a disciplined life is my Sikh, rather he is my master and I am his slave.]
The Guru further observed:
He is not a Sikh who does not observe discipline
Without discipline one is just a vagabond,
Wandering aimlessly from door to door,
Without discipline one falls into the hellish pit.
One who does not observe discipline is a defaulter,
One who does not observe discipline is a wild creature,
One who does not observe discipline cannot be happy,
Therefore hold fast to the disciplined way of life.[1]

He adopted novel methods to train them. For example he led a batch of hardy young men to the river Satluj flowing near by. He took a bag full of gold coins and gold bangles worn by rich men in those days. These costly articles were thrown one by one into the river. They were told that anything found by them would belong to them.

In this connection Latif narrates an interesting incident. A rich Sindhi merchant, a disciple of the Guru, paid him a visit. The Guru was then strolling along the bank of river Satluj with a handful of followers. The merchant presented the Guru with a pair of golden bracelets studded with diamonds, each worth Rs. 25,000. The Guru revolved one bracelet on his finger in such a way that it fell into the river. Everybody stood aghast. The Guru offered a reward of Rs. 500 to anyone recovering it. One daring youth came forward and enquired of the Guru as to the probable place where it had fallen. The Guru took off the other bracelet and threw it into the water indicating the probable spot. All were stunned at such a loss. The Guru delivered a homily on the nothingness of worldly things, He assured the merchant that his gift had been accepted. He then walked back home leaving his Sikhs to struggle with the turbulent rapids on a bed strewn with pebbles and stones.

[1]Tankhah Nama, quoted by Sher Singh in his *Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh*, 128-29.

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The Guru laid down certain rules for the meals taken in the Guru's *langar*.

(1) His kitchen should be considered as the one belonging to God.

(2) All the Sikhs visiting him should eat in the *langar*.

(3) Anyone objecting to the meals on caste consideration should be considered a non-Sikh.

(4) A prayer should be said before the distribution of the sacred food.

(5) "After meals the first stanza of the fifth *Asht apadi* of the *Sukhmani* should be recited as a thanks-giving."

(6) After eating to his fill nobody should take any food with him.

(7) An invitation from a Sikh to dine should not be declined and the invited person should not find fault with it.

(8) A hungry Sikh must be fed and treated respectfully.[1]

After his return to Anandpur Guru Gobind Das did not neglect his literary activities. In 1696 he wrote *Triya Charitra* mainly to divert the attention of his young disciples from sex thoughts to the nobler cause, in the service of religion and nation. *Ram Avtar* was finished in 1698. His own short biography, the *Bachitra Natak*, was written in the first half of 1699.[2]

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[1]Macauliffe, IV, 109.
[2]Narain Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh Retold*, 186.

CHAPTER 14

Creation of the Khalsa, 1699

Aurangzeb's religious policy

In Islam the "true king is God, and earthly rulers are merely His agents bound to enforce His law on all. The civil authorities exist solely to spread and enforce the true faith. In such a state infidelity is logically equivalent to treason, because the infidel repudiates the authority of the true king and pays homage to his rivals, the false gods and goddesses. Therefore, the toleration of any sect outside the fold of orthodox Islam is no better than compounding with sin. And the worst form of sin is polytheism, the belief that the one true God has partners in the form of other deities. Islamic theology, therefore, tells the true believer that his highest duty is to make exertion (*jihad*)[1] in the path of God, by waging war against infidel lands (*dar-ul-harb*) and they become a part of the realm of Islam (*dar-ul-Islam*) and their populations are converted into true believers. After conquest the entire infidel population becomes theoretically reduced to the status of slaves of the conquering army. The conversion of the entire population to Islam and the extinction of every form of dissent, is the ideal of the Muslim State. If any infidel is suffered to exist in the community, it is a necessary evil, and for a transitional period only. Political and social disabilities must be imposed on him, and bribes offered to him from the public funds to hasten the day of his spiritual enlightenment and the addition of his name to the roll of true believers."[2]

Aurangzeb was a true believer in this Islamic theory. Further his reputation had suffered greatly in the Muslim world for having executed all his brothers and their sons and for imprisoning his father. To improve this image he became a ruthless puritan. He wished to show that his aim was to restore Islam in its original glory. He adopt-

[1]*The Quran*, IX, 29, quoted by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his *A Short History of Aurangzib*, 140.

[2]Sir Jadunath, Sarkar op. cit., 140-41.

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ed the policy of a bitter persecutor of non-Muslims as well as of non-Sunni Muslims.

Policy towards Hindus

Aurangzeb decided to use all the resources of a vast empire in suppressing Hinduism and converting the infidels to Islam. During his viceroyalty of Gujarat in 1644 he "declared the recently built Hindu temple of Chintaman in Ahmadabad by killing a cow in it and then turned the building into a mosque. He had at that time also demolished many other Hindu temples in the province.[1]

In the beginning of his reign Aurangzeb ordered "the local officers in every town and village of Orissa from Katak to Medinipur" "to pull down all temples, including even clay huts, built during the last 10 or 12 years, and to allow no old temple to be repaired."[2] In 1661-62 a big temple was demolished at Mathura and a Jama Masjid was erected in its place in the heart of Hindu population.[3] From April, 1665, Hindus were charged double the customs duty of that paid by Muslims on all articles brought for sale.[4] In May, 1667, Muslims were exempted from payment of customs duty altogether, while Hindus had to pay at the old rate of five per cent.[5]

In 1668 Hindu fairs and festivals were stopped.[6] On April 9, 1669, a general order applicable to all parts of the Mughal Empire was issued "to demolish all the schools and temples of the infidels and to put down their religious teaching".[7] In January, 1670, the biggest temple of Keshav Rae at Mathura was destroyed and the city was named Islamabad.[8] "The destruction of Hindu places of worship was one of the chief duties of the *Muhtasibs* or Censors of Morals who were appointed in all the sub-divisions and cities of the empire."[9]

Hindus employed in public services including clerks and accountants were dismissed in 1671.[10] The post of Qanungo could be retained

[1]Sri Jadunath, op. cit., 147.
[2]ibid.
[3]ibid, 152.
[4]ibid, 150.
[5]ibid.
[6]ibid, 151.
[7]Saqi Mustaid Khan, *Maasir-e-Alamgiri*, 81.
[8]Sir Jadunath Sarkar, op. cit., 147-48.
[9]ibid, 148; Bakhtawar Khan, *Mirate-e-Alam*, in *E&D*, VII, 15[c].
[10]Sarkar, 150-51.

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by a Hindu only on embracing Islam.[1] Others who became Muslims received stipends, rewards, government jobs, release from jails, right to ancestral property and other privileges. The new converts riding on elephants followed by bands and flags were paraded through the streets and bazars.[2] Jazia was charged from all Hindus from April 2, 1679. "Jazia meant for the Hindus an addition of fully one-third to every subject's direct contribution to the State."[3] The contemporary European traveller Manucci observed: "Many Hindus who were unable to pay turned Muhammadan, to obtain relief from the insults of the collectors. ...Aurangzib rejoices."[4] In June, 1680, the temples of Amber, the capital of Jaipur State, the most loyal Hindu State, were demolished.[5] In March, 1695, all the Hindus except Rajputs were ordered not to ride on elephants, fine horses and in palanquins or to carry arms.[6]

Syad Muhammad Latifs writes:

"He discouraged the teaching of the Hindus, burnt to the ground the great Pagoda near Delhi, and destroyed the temple of Bishnath at Benares, and the great temple of Dera Kesu Rai at Mathura, said to have been built by Raja Narsingh Deo, at a cost of thirty-three lakhs of rupees. The gilded domes of this temple were so high that they could be seen from Agra 54 kms distant. On the site of the ruined temple, he built a vast mosque at a great cost. The richly decorated idols of the temples were removed to Agra and placed beneath the steps leading to the mosque of Nawab Begum. The name Mathura was changed into Islamabad, and was so written in all correspondence and spoken by the people. Aurangzeb had resolved that the belief in one God and the Prophet should be, not the prevailing, but the only religion of the empire of Hindustan. He issued mandates to the viceroys and governors of provinces to destroy pagodas and idols throughout his dominions. About three hundred temples in various parts of Rajputana were destroyed and their idols broken. The emperor appointed mullahs, with a party of horse attached to each, to check all ostentatious display of idol worship, and, sometime afterwards, he forbade fairs on Hindu festivals, and issued a circular to all governors and

[1]Sarkar, 151.
[2]ibid, 150.
[3]ibid, 149.
[4]ibid, 150.
[5]ibid. 151.
[6]ibid.

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men in authority prohibiting the employment of Hindus in the offices of state immediately under them, and commanding them to confer all such offices on Mahomedans only. About the year 1690, the emperor issued an edict prohibiting Hindus from being carried in palanquins or riding on Arab horses. All servants of the state were ordered to embrace the Mahomedan religion, under pain of dismissal, those who refused were deprived of their posts. A large number of *jogis*, *sanyasis* and other religious men were driven out of the king's dominions. The emperor reduced the duty on merchandise belonging to Mahomedans to one half the amount paid by Hindus, and remitted a number of other obnoxious taxes. Following the tradition of his house, he, in 1661, married his son, Moazzam, to the daughter of Raja Rup Singh. In the 22nd year of his reign, he renewed the Jazia, or poll-tax, on Hindus, throughout his dominions. The Hindus of Delhi gathered in large numbers beneath the jharoka window, on the banks of the river, and implored his majesty to remit the obnoxious tax; but the emperor was inexorable. The Hindus adopted the expedient of closing the shops in the city, and all business came to a standstill. They thronged the bazars from the palace to the grand mosque, one Friday, with the object of seeking relief. The crowd increased every moment, and the king's equipage was interrupted at every step. He stopped for a while to hear them, but the multitude held their ground. At length under orders from the emperor, war elephants were directed against the mob, and, the retinue forcing its way through, numbers were trodden to death by horses and elephants. After this the Hindus submitted without further demur."[1]

Conversion of Hindus to Islam was in full swing. Bakhtawar Khan states that Aurangzeb himself administered *Kalima* to prominent persons and adorned them with khilats with his own hands.[2]

Hindu Revolts suppressed

1. The Jats : Gokal, a Jat of Tilpat, revolted against the bigoted governor of Mathura, Abdu Nabi, and in an encounter shot him dead in May, 1669. Aurangzeb sent a strong force against him. After a fierce resistance Gokal was defeated and hacked to pieces. His womenfolk were given away to Muslims. Five thousand Jats were killed and 7,000 were taken prisoners.[3]

[1] *History of the Panjab*, 176-77.
[2] Bakhtawar Khan, 159.
[3] Sarkar, 152.

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2. The Satnamis : Satnamis were living at Narnaul and in its neighbourhood. Khafi Khan, the contemporary historian of Aurangzeb writes: "Though they dress like faqirs, most of them follow agriculture or trade on a small capital. Following the path of their own faith, they wish to live with a good name and never attempt to obtain money by any dishonest and unlawful means.[1] One day in 1672 a Mughal soldier picked up a quarrel with a Satnami and broke his head with his baton. Other Satnamis beat the soldier in return. The local officer sent a party of footmen to punish the Satnamis who gathered in a body, seized their arms and drove them away. Thereafter about 5,000 Satnamis gathered in arms. Small parties of troops sent by local officers were repulsed. The rebels plundered Narnaul and demolished mosques. Aurangzeb sent a force of 10,000 strong with artillery. "After a most obstinate battle, two thousand of the Satnamis fell on the field, while many more were slain during the pursuit."[2] All the Satnamis were wiped out, and no trace of them was left.

3. The Sikhs : Aurangzeb dealt with the Sikhs in the same manner. In November, 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur was called upon to embrace Islam, and on his refusal he was beheaded. His companions were most cruelly murdered.

4. The Rajputs : In December, 1678, Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, the *thanadar* of Jamrud at the Khaibar Pass, passed away. Aurangzeb immediately proceeded to annex his kingdom to the Mughal Empire, and himself went to Ajmer in January, 1679. Jaswant Singh's two widows gave birth to two sons on their way back at Lahore. One of them died soon afterwards. The other child, Ajit Singh, was detained at Delhi to be brought up in the imperial harem. "The throne of Jodhpur was offered to Ajit on condition of his turning Muslim."[3] On the Rani's refusal, Aurangzeb ordered them to be taken under a strong escort to the prison fortress of Nurgarh. Before the Mughal troops could arrive, their residence in Delhi was besieged by Raghu Nath, a noble of Jodhpur, with one hundred devoted soldiers. There were a few Mughal troopers guarding the mansion. In the melee, Durga Das, "the flower of Rathor chivalry,"[4] "slipped out with Ajit and the Ranis dressed in male attire, and rode away direct for Marwar."[5] Raghu Nath

[1]Sarkar, 153.
[2]ibid, 154.
[3]ibid, 161.
[4]Ibid, 162.
[5]bid.

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and his men "dyed the streets of Delhi with blood,"[1] and then all met hero's death. The Mughal army went in pursuit of Durga Das. Small bands of Rathors turn by turn, at intervals, barred the path of Mughal forces, and thus allowed time to Durga Das to escape. These terrible conflicts every two or three hours, dismayed the Mughals who gave up the pursuit late in the same night. Ajit and Ranis reached Marwar territory safely. Then ensued a regular war between Aurangzeb and the Rathors. "But for Durga Das's twenty-five years of unflagging exertion and wise contrivance, Ajit Singh could not have secured his father's throne."[2] "Jodhpur and all the great towns in the plain fell and were pillaged; the temples were thrown down and mosques erected on their sites."[3]

The annexation of Marwar was followed by the conquest of Mewar. Aurangzeb's artillery manned by Europeans easily defeated Maharana Raj Singh of Udaipur. Chitor was seized and 63 temples in the town were razed to the ground. At Udaipur 173 temples were demolished.[4]

5. The Marathas : Aurangzeb then turned his attention towards the Marathas. He reached Aurangabad on March 22, 1682, never to return to the north, and died at the same place 25 years later. The great Shivaji had passed away at the age of 53 on April 4, 1680. His eldest son, Shambhuji, succeded him. Aurangzeb decided to destroy him. An Englishman who was living at Karwar wrote about the Emperor on July 30, 1682: "He is so inveterate against the Rajah that he hath thrown off his *pagri* and sworn never to put it on again, till he hath either killed, taken, or routed him out of his country."[5] Aurangzeb succeeded in his object. On February 1, 1689, he was captured and dragged by his long hair.[6] Twenty-five of his leading chiefs along with their wives and daughters were also seized. Shambhuji and his prime minister Kavikalash "were dressed as buffoons with long fool's caps and bells placed on their heads, mounted on camels, and brought to Bahadurgarh with drums beating and trumpets pealing. Hundreds of thousands of spectators lined the roads to gaze at Shambhuji as at a new kind of wild beast or demon. Thus degraded, the captives were slowly paraded through the entire camp and finally brought to the

[1]Sarkar. ibid.
[2]ibid, 162.
[3]ibid, 163.
[4]ibid, 164.
[5]ibid, 277.
[6]ibid, 293.

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Emperor who was sitting in full durbar for the occasion. At the sight of the prisoner, Aurangzeb descended from his throne and kneeling down on the carpet bowed his head to the ground in double thankfulness to the Giver of this crowning victory."[1]

Khafi Khan, the contemporary historian of Aurangzeb's reign says that this Kavikalash shouted to Shambhuji:

"O Rajah! even Aurangzib dare not sit on the throne in thy presence, but must kneel to do thee homage."[2] Shambhuji did not bow before the Emperor though pressed hard by the courtiers to do so. On the other hand he asked for the hand of one of Aurangzeb's daughters. He was immediately blinded and the tongue of Kavikalash was cut off. They were tortured for a fortnight. On March 11, 1689, their limbs were hacked to pieces, one by one, and dogs were fed on their flesh. Their heads were fixed on spears and exhibited in all the major towns and cities of the Deccan with the beat of drums and blowing of trumpets.[3] Aurangzeb then seized the surviving widows of Shivaji, wives of Shambhuji and of his younger brother Raja Ram and their sons and daughters including seven year old Shahu.[4]

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The Marathas harass the Emperor

Now there being no head of the Marathas, hundreds of Maratha chiefs at the head of their small bands began to harass the Mughals anywhere and everywhere. It became a people's war. Aurangzeb and his generals could not be present at all places. The Emperor had to face "an enemy all pervasive from Bombay to Madras across the Indian Peninsula, elusive as the wind, without any headman or stronghold whose capture would naturally result in the extinction of their power."[5] The Empire's leading chiefs and men suffered terribly. "Porters disappeared; transport beasts died of hunger and overwork; scarcity of grain was ever present in his camp. The endless war in the Deccan exhausted his treasury; the Government turned bankrupt; the soldiers starving from arrears of pay (usually three years overdue) mutinied."[6] The Marathas were supreme. They plundered the Mughal territory

[1]Sarkar, 294.
[2]ibid, fn.
[3]ibid, 295.
[4]ibid, 296.
[5]ibid, 300.
[6]ibid, 302.

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and camp mercilessly. "There was an exultant and menacing Maratha army always hanging three or four miles behind the Emperor's camp wherever it marched or halted."[1] This happened during the regime of Raja Ram, the younger son of Shivaji who died at the age of thirty on March 2, 1700.

After him the leadership of the Marathas was taken over by Raja Ram's 25-year-old widow, Tara Bai. This young woman worked wonders. She created a new and vigorous Maharashtra in a few years. "The Maratha queen flew from camp to camp and from fortress to fortress, sharing the hardships of a trooper, exposed to the sun, sleeping on the ground. Tara Bai seemed to multiply herself to be everywhere and always encouraging her officers, and planning campaigns on a wider front. So clear was her vision, unerring her judgment, that she was equally welcome on the battlefield and in the council chamber by the war-worn soldiers and astute politicians of the older generation. Within a short time the Maratha counter-offensive, at first halting and ineffective assumed alarming proportions and began to threaten the very heart of the Mughal Empire."[2]

The enormous losses sustained by the Emperor are thus described by Sir Jadunath:

"The wastage of the Deccan war which raged intensely for nearly twenty-years, was one hundred thousand soldiers and followers and three times that number of horses, elephants, camels and oxen on the Mughals side every year."[3]

About the appalling economic devastation of the Maratha country, the European traveller Manucci wrote:

"The fields are left devoid of trees and bare of crops, their places being taken by the bones of men and beasts. The country was so entirely desolated and depopulated that neither fire nor light could be found in the course of a three or four day's journey."[4]

Policy towards unorthodox Muslims

Aurangzeb was equally uncompromising against Shias, Sufi saints and liberal-minded religious leaders. A few examples are given here:

[1]ibid, 303.

[2]*Rajware*, XVI, document no. 35, quoted by Brij Kishore, in his *Tara Bai and Her Times*, 70.

[3]Sir Jadunath Sarkar, op. cit., 303.

[4]ibid.

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In 1659, Mullan Shah Lahori, a prominent disciple of Mian Mir, was persecuted for being a favourite of his father.[1] Twelve Sayyids of Delhi were molested for being in good books of his brother Dara Shikoh.[2] Shaikh Neamatullah Qadari of Narnaul, religious tutor of his brother Shah Shuja, and the Shaikh's sons were tortured.[3]

2. In 1661 Mansur-e-sani Sufi Muhammad Said Sarmad,[4] and later another Sufi saint, Qalandar[5] were beheaded for believing in Sufi principles. The famous Sufi saint, Yahiya Chishti, was badly maltreated for holding a musical gathering.[6]

3. In 1669 celebration of Muharram was banned.[7] Many Shia Imams were executed.[8]

4. The religious head of Bohras and his 700 followers were shot dead.[9] Sayyid Shahji, claiming descent from Prophet Muhammad, head of the Khojas, was poisoned to death, and his son was persecuted.[10]

5. In 1670 wearing of *zarbaft* clothes, embroidered in golden threads, was forbidden. Aurangzeb's eldest son, Prince Sultan Muhammad, born in November, 1639, did not abide by this order. He was killed by administering poison.[11]

6. The length of beards for all Muslims was fixed at four fingers or eight centimetres. The extra length was to be cut off. The Muhtasibs imprisoned defaulters.[12] Aurangzeb's ambassador to Iran did not observe this rule. The Shah in a public durbar at Teheran burnt the extra length of his beard.[13]

7. In 1672 Diwan Muhammad Tahir was executed for liberal inter-

[1]Narayan Kaul Aziz, *Tawarikh-e-Kashmir*, 161-62; Sher Khan Lodi, *Mirat-ul-Khayal*, 175-178, 200-1.

[2]Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, III, 354-55.

[3]ibid, 195-96, 218-20.

[4]Abul Fazal Mamuri, *Aurangzeb Namah*, 45b; Sher Khan Lodi, 172; Narayan Kaul Aziz, 172; Maulvi Abdul Ali Khan, A Sketch of the Life of Sarmad, *JRAS*, 1924, 111, 116; Abdul Khan Azad, *Hayat-e-Sarmad*, 52-53.

[5]Ganesh Das Vadehra, *Chahar Bagh-e-Panjab*, 110.

[6]Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat-e-Ahmadi*, and *Khatima*, English translation by C.N. Sudan and Nawab Ali, 701.

[7]Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, 213-14.

[8]Ali Muhammad, 262; *Khatima*, 110.

[9]Ali Muhammad, 262.

[10]ibid, 323-24.

[11]Muhammad Sadiq, *Adab-e-Alamgiri*, Letter no. 565; Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib*, II, 309-10.

[12]Manucci, II, 5.

[13]A.M. Ahuja, N.D. Ahuja, *The Sikh Review*, 1980, 13 fn. 40.

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pretation of Islam.[1]

Qumir, a famous theologian, Shaikh Ali of Sarhind, a scholarly holy man, and Husain Malik were hanged on the same charge.[2]

8. In 1683 Mir Husain was exiled from Kashmir into tribal territory for having broken his Ramzan fast a little before sunset.[3] A Goanese Muslim was executed for becoming a Christian.[4]

Guru Gobind Das's contemplation

Slowly but steadily these news were trickling down to Guru Gobind Das. To him the achievements of Raja Ram, a young man four years his junior, appeared stupendous and surprising. He contemplated that being the spiritual head of a great community, he had greater responsibility than a political leader like Raja Ram. He knew that he had a definite mission and duty to perform. The time had come and the hour had struck. The circumstances were favourable and the opportunity was at hand. Delay might be dangerous. If the Emperor, the mightiest of the mighty, could be defied while commanding in person, there was no reason why he should not succeed against the emperor's governors.

A moment's reflection reminded him that Guru Nanak had described the rulers of his time as tigers and dogs. That situation had not changed even after 200 years. The policy of non-violence, submission and surrender had produced no effect upon these ferocious tigers and mad dogs. Appeals, protests and representations were treated as treasons punishable with death. Agitation was followed by disastrous consequences. Should this situation be allowed to continue till eternity, he thought. Musketry and gunnery were the only remedies, he realized.

After the most determined meditation on this sad state of affairs, the Guru came to the conclusion that to tyrannise was bad, but to bear tyranny patiently was worse. The country did not belong to the king. The king belonged to the country, and the country belonged to the people. If the king was bad, people must rise in revolt. Without poli-

[1] *Maasir-e-Alamgiri*, 120.

[2] Manucci, II, 118-21; Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami, *Khazana-e-Amira*, 328; Narayan Kaul Aziz, 165.

[3] Narayan Kaul Aziz, 165.

[4] Manucci, II, 60. (The author is indebted to Ahujas for this account, published in, *The Sikh Review*, December, 1980, under caption 'Persecution of Muslims by Aurangzeb.)

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tical liberty, religious, intellectual, social and economic freedom could not be achieved. Political freedom could be won by armies. The armies of the suppressed people were non-existent. The spirit of the brave Jats of Mathura and Delhi had been crushed. The heroic Satnamis had been completely wiped out of existence. The Rajput resistance was broken. The noble Shivaji had died young. His eldest son Shambhuji had been hacked to pieces. His only son Shahu was in captivity. The Guru's own house was no exception. His great grandfather, Guru Arjan, was tortured to death. His grandfather Hargobind had suffered twelve years' imprisonment. His father Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed. His most faithful follower, Bhai Mati Das, was sawn across from head to loins, while others were boiled or cut to pieces.

Gobind Das did not feel dismayed. He did not lose heart. He knew that human mind when properly inspired was capable of rising to the loftiest heights, and when rightly guided and controlled could work wonders. He also realized that he would have to depend entirely on his own resources. The hill Rajputs whom he wanted to use in the national cause had failed. He set about planning and preparing himself for the struggle to win freedom. His army was to be based on social justice. There could be no discrimination in the name of caste, creed and colour. His soldiers unpaid, ill-armed, poorly equipped, and untrained were to be inspired with feelings of patriotism and nationalism. In *Krishna Avtar* the Guru says:

Kou kise ko rājnade hai
Jo lai hai nij bal sit lai hai.[1]

[No people can have self-rule as a gift from another. It is to be seized through their own strength.]

Without freedom there is doom. When doom stares in the face, gloom engulfs even the bravest. But between doom and gloom bloom some of the noblest specimen of humanity. Guru Gobind Das was certainly one of such specimens. God's choice has always fallen upon men who can wield arms and armour with a single-minded devotion to their noble cause and who can successfully resist all temptations for *zan* (woman), *zar* (money), and *zamin* (land) from the devil.

Was Guru Gobind Das an enemy of Islam?

Guru Gobind Das was determined to exterminate the religious oppression of the Mughal Government. He concentrated against the

[1]Narain Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 16.

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cruel government and not against Islam. There is not a word in his speeches and writings to prove this baseless charge. Nor does history offer any event or incident in proof of it. He was an embodiment of love and affection for all. His instructions to his Sikhs were to treat everybody with courtesy and consideration. It was for this reason that both Hindus and Muslims were attracted towards him. Muslim Sufi saints and Muslim commanders of note, and hundreds of Muslim soldiers fought under his banners. Pir Budhu Shah of Sadhaura, together with his sons and seven hundred followers fought hard in the battle of Bhangani in 1688 in which the Muslim saint lost two of his sons and hundreds of his disciples. In the battle of Anandpur in 1702 Mir Beg and Mamun Khan commanded Guru's forces in fighting against the Mughal troops. At the same place in 1704 General Sayyid Khan of the Mughal army considered it improper and unjust to wage a war against the Guru. He deserted his post and joined the Guru. Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan saved him from capture by the Mughal army. Qazi Pir Muhammad did not confirm the Guru's identity, while Rae Kalha offered him refuge and entertained him generously.

In *Akal Ustat* the Guru says:

1. "Some are Hindus while others are Muslims. Of the latter some are Shias and others are Sunnis. Man's caste should be considered as one." (Manas ki jāt sabhai ekai pahchānbo.)

2. "Karta, Karim, Rājak, Rahim is the same. No other distinction should be recognised at all."

3. "Temple and mosque are the same. Hindu worship and Muslim prayer are the same. All men are alike, but they are under delusion."

4. "Gods, demons, heavenly dancers, singers, Muslims, Hindus wear different dresses under the condition of their countries. But they possess eyes, ears, bodies, made of the same elements, composed of earth, air, fire and water."[1]

5. "Allah, the unknowable, the Puranas and the Quran are the same. All are manifestation of One, and One is the creator of all."[1]

In the Jap Guru Gobind Das has given 735 names to God. Of these 30 are of Islam.

He further says:

"Even in error deem not the God of the Hindus,
To be other than the God of the Muslims;
Worship the one God,

[1]Trilochan Singh, *The Jap*, 6.

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Recognize the Enlightener;
All men have the same human form,
In all men blazes the same divine light."[1]

In *Bachitra Natak* the Guru says that there is no enmity between the successors of Baba Nanak and of Babar. The former are religious leaders and the latter are political rulers. He writes that his enemies will be punished by the Mughal kings.[2]

He declared:

"The House of Baba Nanak and that of Babar both derive their authority from God. Recognise the former as supreme in religion, and the latter as supreme in secular affairs."

This clearly shows that the Guru admitted the secular authority of the Emperor over his Sikhs. Sujan Rae Bhandari, while describing the Sikhs wrote in 1696:

"In their eyes their own people and others as well as friends and foes are all alike. They love their friends, but they do not illtreat their enemies."[3]

Gobind Das as a saint-soldier

A true soldier is a saintly person, and a true saint is a mighty warrior, a powerful hero. The hero is a person who can restrain the natural outgoing tendency of the mind and the senses. He is a seeker after truth. Through *Sādhanā* or spiritual discipline he enjoys eternal bliss and is ever immersed in perennial peace. He wages a war in order that the good and innocent people of the world might live in peace, and enjoy reasonable happiness. The self is the fountain-source of immortality, eternal bliss and enduring tranquility. Back to the self, is the motto of the saint. This calls for greater heroism than is needed even on the battlefield. The internal war is more deadly than the external war. The inner enemy is more dreadful than the external enemy.

A saint-soldier surrenders his infinite nature to the Lotus-Feet of the Lord. He cuts off the shackles that bind him to this earth. He detaches himself from earthly ties. For an instant it looks as if he has jumped into the ocean. But the hero does not hesitate. He takes the plunge. He surprisingly discovers that he has jumped into the safest boat of God's Grace. He then returns to the shore as a victor,

[1] *Akal Ustat*, Swayyas 15, 85; Narain Singh, *Dasam Granthi Satik*, 82-83.
[2] *Bachitra Natak*, Section 13, Chaupai, 9.
[3] *Khulasat-ut-Twarikh*, 70.

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monarch of all he surveys. He is the saviour, the greatest saint. He is the supreme benefactor of humanity.

The saint-soldier is very embodiment of renunciation and devotion to duty. He is ever ready to give up all what is dear to him, even his life to defend freedom of innocent people, freedom of the country and to protect Dharma. He is ready to undergo any amount of suffering and hardship to achieve this sublime ideal. His life is synonymous with discipline. Heroism is ingrained in his very nature.

Guru Gobind Das refused to believe that the Hindu race was decadent. It only needed re-awakening. He was determined to play the role of a guardian angel of a new Hindustan.

The Guru's mission

He decided to create national awakening in Panjab as it had been done in Maharashtra by Shivaji. The time chosen was opportune. Aurangzeb was involved in life and death struggle in the Deccan with the Marathas. Panjab was in charge of Prince Muazzam who lived in Kabul. The Governors of Lahore, Jammu and Sarhind had failed to crush him. The Government at Delhi was in a state of disorganisation. The hill rajas were in revolt against the Mughals. A better time could not be expected to fulfil his life's mission, and the Guru was not the man to miss it. He had first tried to plant his ideas in the mind of the warrior class of Rajputs of the Shivalik Hills. He soon discovered that the caste-ridden and class-dominated feudal lords would not respond to his appeals and they would not fit in his ideology. They had grown flabby possibly because of comforts enjoyed by them. He therefore turned his attention to the down-trodden masses. He believed that he would be able to achieve his objective by stirring the latent faculties of the human will, which possessed the elasticity of rising to the tallest heights as well as of sinking to the lowest depths. The Guru made full use of the strong sentiment which had been expressing itself in the Sikh community in the form of sincere devotion and loving obedience for the person of the Guru.

While reading the Puranas, the Guru realized that God was the wielder of arms to punish tyrants and destroy evil-doers. He was also, the bestower of gifts and fountain-head of mercy. Further, the Guru had been deeply struck by the idea that God had been sending a saviour at critical times to save the virtuous and destroy the wicked. He knew that he had been sent to this world for the same purpose. In *Bachitra Natak* the Guru says:

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1. *Ham eh kāj jagat mo āe*
Dharam hei Gur Dev pathāe
Jahān tahān tum dharam bithāro
Dusht dokhian pakar pachhāṛo

[For this purpose I came into this world, God sent me for the sake of dharam. Wherever you are, spread dharam. Root out the oppressors and the wicked.]

2. Yāhi kāj dharā ham janmam
Samajh leho sādhu sab manmam
Dharam chalāwan sant ubāran
Dusht saban ko mūl upāran.[1]

[For this purpose was I born. Bear this in mind all ye saints. To propagate dharam, to protect saints. To annihilate all the tyrants.]

In order to seek divine approval of his mission, he entered into a blissful communion with Almighty and received the following reply:

Main apna sut tohe niwājā
Panth prachur karbe kaho sāja
Jaha tahān tai dharam chalāe
Kabudh karan te lok hatāe.[2]

[I have cherished you as my son. I have created you to spread Panth. Wherever you are promote dharam, and restrain the people from evil deeds.]

The Guru then prays to Shiva to give him strength of mind to fight valorously to a finish for victory in the cause of right and justice. He says:

Deh Siva bar mohi ehai
Subh karman te kabhun na tarun,
Na darun ar so jab jāe larun,
Nishche kar apni jit karun
Aru Sikh han apne hi man kau
Eh lālach gun tau uchrun
Jab āv ki audh nidhān bane,
At hi ran mai tab jūjh marun.[3]

[1] *Bachitra Natak*, Section VI, Chaupais, 42, 43.
[2] ibid, Chaupai, 29. In the translation from *Bachitra Natak*, *Chandi Charitra* and *Akal Ustat*, my friend Nirbhai Singh has given me great help.
[3] *Chandi Charitra*, part I, 231.

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[O Shiva give me the boon that I may not deter from righteous deeds. Nor may I fear an enemy. When I go to fight, I must have determination for victory. And I may guide my mind to aspire after uttering your attributes. When the end of my life comes, then I may die fighting heroically.]

The Guru then invokes for the long life of all those who ever remember God and fight in the righteous cause. In *Krishna Avtar* he writes:

Dhan jiyo tih kau jag main
Mukh te Hari chit main yuddh bichāre[1]

[Blessed are they in this world, who have Hari on their tongue and war in their heart.]

The Goddess Durga

The whole region lying at the foot of the Shivalik Hills, both to the east and west of Guru's headquarters at Anandpur, consisting of the districts of Ambala, Hoshiarpur, Kangra and Jammu, was dominated by Durga. Several places in the region have their names after Durga, such as Kalka, Chandi Mandar, Chandigarh and Ambala. They are seven goddesses, all sisters. They are Vaishno Devi in Jammu, Jawalamukhi Devi in Kangra, Chintpurni Devi in Hoshiarpur, Naina Devi close to Anandpur, Mansa Devi at Manimajra, another goddess at Chandi Mandar, and one more at Talokpur below Morni. They all assemble from time to time at the temple of Kangra. The mother goddess was the most common object of veneration and worship for the people in this area. The Guru wished to have the common people on his side in his mission, by stimulating them in the name of Durga, and desired to inspire them in the national cause. In the character of the goddess, Durga the Guru found inspiration for his great project of destroying religious fanaticism and frenzy of Mughals.

To the Guru the Goddess Durga symbolised divine power with a holy sword in hand and riding on a lion. In *Chandi Charitras* the Guru says that in the past God had created Durga to destroy the evil-doers. "Having created Durga, O God, Thou didst destroy the demons."[2] The Goddess was the war hero. She punished the tyrants. She helped those who stood up to fight wickedness. The Goddess protected

[1]*Chandi Charitra* is an adaptation from *Markandeya Purana* in Brajbhasha by Guru Gobind Singh. It describes a war between gods and demons.

[2]Macauliffe, V, 82.

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the weak, encouraged the oppressed, and inspired them to resist evil and tyranny. This duty had now been assigned to him. He was eager to know the secret of success from Durga. He sang "the praises of Chandi so that they might be chanted for warlike purposes, and that even cowards on hearing her story might obtain courage and the hearts of the brave beat with unbounded enthusiasm."

The learned pandits in the service of the Guru advised him to perform the grand ceremony of *Hom*. At their suggestion he invited Pandit Kesho Das from Banaras to conduct the ceremony on the hill of Naina Devi[1] at the temple[2] of the Goddess 12 km north-east of Anandpur. The ceremony began on the Durga Ashtami day in March, 1698, and lasted for full one year. According to Bhai Santokh Singh, author of *Suraj Prakash*, the *havan* began on the full moon day of Baisakh, 1698 AD.[3]

The first mention of *havan* is in *Mahman Prakash Vartak* (a prose work) written in 1739 AD, 31 years after the Guru's death by Bawa Kripal Singh Bhalla.

The first mention of worshipping the goddess is found in *Mahman Prakash Kavita* (in verse) by Sarup Das Bhalla, written in 1776 AD.

Bhai Sukha Singh in his *Gurbilas* written in 1797 AD, says that the *havan* lasted for four years, for 2½ years on the banks of Satluj and for 1½ years at Naina Devi Hill.[3]

Enormous quantities of clarified butter and incense were burnt amidst the chanting of mantras or hymns by a band of learned priests headed by Kesho Das. Thousands of Brahmans and others were daily fed on *krahprasad* and *puris*. Kanhiya Lal says that this function cost the Guru fourteen lakhs of rupees.[4] The most intensive programme of worship began on the first Navaratra day on March 21, 1699. It was expected that on the Durga Ashtami day, March 28, 1699, the Goddess would appear.

Nothing happened. The Guru was incensed. Kesho Das explained that the Goddess wanted a sacrifice of a valuable living being. The

[1]Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, 165; Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikh*, I, 68.

[2]The Naina Devi temple is situated at a height of 3,595 feet, and a small town of the same name stands below it.

[3]*Vide* Dr. Bhai Jodh Singh's article entitled Bhai Vir Singh's criticism of Durga Puja, story relating to Guru Gobind Singh in *Khera*, 17-23.

[4]*Tarikh-e-Panjab*, 50.

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Guru offered a tiger named Sangata kept by him,[1] the famous mount of the goddess. Just then at the bidding of the Guru the whole lot of *sāmagrī* or incense material was thrown into the fire pit. The roaring of the tiger, the loud shouts of audience and ringing of gongs were mingled with the huge flames leaping up sky-high. Light, sound and fragrance all combined to create a supernatural atmosphere. In its midst the Guru declared that the Goddess had appeared before him. The Guru then portrayed the picture of the Durga in these words: "She is neither a man nor a woman, nor does she ride on a lion. She does not have eight arms. She lives neither in temples nor in the hills. Neither is she *devān wāli* nor *lātān wāli*. The goddess which we have seen always sparkles like lightning. Whomsoever she blesses, makes him victorious. In the right hand she makes a coward alert. Her companion is never afraid of an enemy. She kills enemies by an open challenge. Whoever has faith in her succeeds in attaining success. She makes paupers princes. The nation which does not worship her is drowned in mid current. One who keeps her with him is never defeated. She converts jackals into lions, and instils a new life into dead souls. One who bows before it is liberated from the cycle of birth and death."[2]

Then he drew out the sword out of scabbard and said: "You are the winner of countries, desroyer of the armies of the wicked, adorner of the brave, bestower of happiness on the good, terrifier of the cruel; your radiance and splendour are dazzling like the sun. I seek your protection." He declared that the Goddess had blessed him with success in his mission. That mission would be proclaimed on the third day at Anandpur on the first of Baisakh, the New Year Day, March 30, 1699. He invited the entire audience to go thither and attend the grand function.[3] Not to arouse the suspicion of the government officials, the Guru took advantage of the Baisakhi fair which had been held at Anandpur in previous years.

Reasons for the foundation of the Khalsa

Certain factors impelled the Guru to create a national army of his own.

1. The Guru's relations with the hill rajas had shown that there

[1] *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, 50-51.
[2] Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, 165-91.
[3] Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, 18-19.

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could be no compromise between the cosmopolitan Sikhs and caste-ridden Rajas. Their hostility to the Guru was firm and determined. The Guru had to guard against it.

2. To oppose Aurangzeb's religious fanaticism, a national army was essential.

3. According to Cunningham and Sir Jadunath Sarkar the Guru was resolved to avenge wrongs done to his family and his country.

4. The collection of money, arms, horses, young men, their military training in horsemanship and in the use of arms, the beating of Ranjit Nagara, the Guru's incessant insistence upon discipline and his construction of forts had created a fear in the minds of the rajas that the Guru intended to establish a Sikh state in the hills at their cost. Sohan Lal also says the rajas thought that the Guru's aim was *mulkgiri* and *Jahāndāri*.

5. The Mughal officers, Muslim masses and hill Rajas were determined to suppress the rising power of the Guru. He was compelled to create his own independent and permanent army. His military force was to be based on strict discipline of service and self-sacrifice and closest attachment to the Guru. He had seen lack of discipline and spirit of desertion in a section of his followers at Bhangani and during Prince Muazzam's campaign in the hills.[1]

The foundation of the Khalsa, 30 March, 1699

At the behest of the Guru, the congregation sauntered down the hill and a multitude mustered on the hill of Anandpur where stands Gurdwara Keshgarh. The Guru remained busy in meditation and contemplation. He told the congregation that about a thousand years ago, Brahmans had created the brave community of Rajputs by performing *Hom* of fire on Mount Abu. The Rajputs were valiant people, but they had failed in preserving India's independence. He was going to perform the Hom of blood to create a new community braver and bolder than Rajputs to liberate the country from foreign oppression and tyranny. It was the most difficult and formidable task. It would succeed only with God's help. On the morning of 30th March he sought God's blessings:

Thād bhayo main jor kar bachan kahā sar nyāe

Umdat-ut-Twarikh, I, 62.

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Panth chale tab jagat men jab tum ho sahae.[1]

[I stood up with folded hands and head bent down and said, Panth can flourish in the world only with your help.]

He entered a specially constructed canopy where a huge congregation was seated. Behind it there was a small tent which was closed on all sides and it could be entered from the canopy alone. The Guru asked them to utter the following call after him:

Jo bole so nihāl, Sat Sri Akal !

[Whoever utters 'The Immortal God is true' will be blessed.]

His youthful personality was magnetic and inspiring, and could hypnotise audiences.

Thi umar batis sāla aur jawāni thi bhari,[2]
Dil men Ishwar, man men lashkar, bāt sachchi aur khari;
Ab banāun khalsa jo sar hatheli par dhare
Desh ki raksha kare aur dharam ki khātir laṛe;
Lomṛi se sher ban-na hai nahin āsān kām,
Magar merā Khālsa sheron se baṛh pāega nām.

The Guru then made the most stirring oration on saving religion which was in great peril, and about his divine mission. The Guru narrated the stories of Government's tyranny, humiliation, tortures, forcible conversions, destruction of temples and schools, brutal persecution of those who protested and of the destruction of Satnamis and Jats. He depicted the miseries they had suffered from and presented pictures of fresh horrors and tribulations which lay in store for them at the hands of the emperor and his officials. He aroused their enthusiasm to get ready to fight against those who trod upon their beliefs and on their very existence. He expressed great faith in the power of the common people. They were many and their oppressors were few. The discourse first excited the whole audience, then enthralled and terrified them and eventually thrilled them. He criticised the Hindu view of life. They believed in non-violence [*Ahimsa paramo dharam*]. They would do no wrong to others. If anybody else oppressed them, they would not oppose. They thought that the oppressor would get the punishment of his evil deeds in the next world. Instead of self-help and resistance they practised patience, non-violence and renunciation. For want of organisation the Hindus could not resist the onslaught of the invaders and government who called Hindus sparrows and them-

[1]Nanak Chand Naz, *Vachitra Natuk*, 126.

[2]The first line is borrowed from a Dev Samaj song.

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selves hawks, meaning thereby that they could cut up Hindus as a hawk mutilated sparrows.[1]

The Guru explained that in order to safeguard their spiritual and temporal rights the people should not depend on fate. They ought to entrust this duty to themselves. They should individually feel any national wrong done, and collectively organise means to resist it. "The Kal Age had reached such a stage that success would come only if a brick could be returned with a stone." Humility and service alone were out of place in this age. To goodness was to be added not only condemnation of evil but also destruction of the evil-doers. Love of a neighbour must accompany the punishment of the trespasser. Service of saints implied annihilation of tyrants as well. Helping friends meant harming enemies too. Deg, Tegh and Fatah formed the Holy Trinity in place of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv, to lead to victory. Deg or cooking cauldron meant food for all, and it was put in place of Brahma. Tegh was the only means of preserving this life in those days, and it stood for Vishnu. Fatah or victory destroyed[2] the enemy and it represented Shiva. The age when salvation was needed after death had passed. Salvation was to be obtained in this very life, here and now.

In his ecstasy the Guru sang the praises of the Sword. "God subdues enemies, so does the Sword, therefore the Sword is God, and God is the Sword.[3] Addressing the Sword he said:

"I bow with love and devotion to the Holy Sword.
Assist me that I may complete this work.
Thou art the subduer of countries,
Destroyer of the armies of the wicked in the battlefield
Thou greatly adornest the brave.
Thine arm is infrangible,
Thy brightness is refulgent.
Thy radiance and splendour dazzle like the sun.
. . . I bow to the Sword, spotless, fearless, and unbreakable...
I bow to the Sword and Rapier which destroy the evil . . .
In this Kal age and at all times there is great confidence in the powerful arm of the Sword .
The demons who could not be drowned in the sea,
and who could not be burnt by fiery arrows,

[1]Macauliffe, V, 83.
[2]*Gur Bilas*, quoted by Banerjee in his *Evolution of the Khalsa*, II, 95.
[3]Macauliffe, V, 83.

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On beholding thy flash, O Sword, cast aside shame and fled . . .
Thy greatness is endless and boundless;
No one hath found its limits.
Thou art God of gods, King of kings,
Compassionate to the poor, and cherisher of the lowly."[1]

Addressing the fighting weapons the Guru said:
Jite shastar nām
Namaskār tām
Jite astar bhen
Namaskār ten.[2]
Namaskāryān mor tirān tufang
Namo khag, adang abhen abhang,
Gadāen grishtān namo saithiyan, Jinhai tuliyan bir biyo na biyān.[3]

[I salute arrows and guns. O sword ! you are powerful and relentless, I salute thee. I salute the heavy *gada* and scimitar. Like them no other hero is born.]

He made a stimulating appeal in the name of the country and nation. He placed great emphasis on the love of mother country and loyalty to dharam. He dwelt on the necessity of subverting the Mughal Empire and building a new nation. He presented a picture of a new class of men and women ready to sacrifice everything in the service of the nation. He put forth the belief that the time was ripe for action.

After this exciting oration, the Guru flashed his sword and said that every great deed was preceded by equally great sacrifice. The Holy Sword would create a heroic nation after supreme sacrifice. He said that the Dharam thirsted for sacrificial blood. The Guru demanded a devotee in whose heart he would plunge his sword. This sent a thrill of horror in the audience. He repeated it in a sterner and more sonorous voice. All were terror-stricken and there was no response at the first and second call. At the third call, Daya Ram, a Khatri of village Dalla in District Lahore, rose in his seat and expressed willingness to lay down his life. He was led into an adjoining tent and asked to sit there quietly. He dipped his sword blade into a vessel full of goats' blood. The general belief is that the Guru had tied five goats,

[1]ibid, 286, 287, 289.
[2]*Bachitra Natak*, Raswal Chhand, Bhujang Paryat Chhand.
[3]ibid.

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and he killed them one by one with a single stroke. This assertion does not appear to be plausible. At the first killing the goats would have bleated loudly which could have been easily heard in the open ground where the Guru was conducting the meeting. He came back with the sword dripping with blood, and asked for another head. Dharam Das, a Jat of Jatwara village in District Saharanpur, offered his life. He was also taken to the same place. The blade was again immersed in blood. The sword was gleamed again and the Guru said: "Is there any other Sikh who will offer me his head? I am in great need of Sikhs' heads."[1] Sahib Chand of village Nangal Shahidan 5 kms from Hoshiarpur, on the Garhshankar road, a barber, stood up. The Guru acted similarly. At the call for a fourth Sikh the audience was horrified. Some fled away, while others bent down their heads in despair. Himmat Chand Kahār or water-carrier by caste of Sangatpura in District Patiala offered himself for the sacrifice. The fifth to volunteer was Mohkam Chand Chhimba, or a calico-printer, of Buriya in District Ambala.[2] The Guru stopped at five. He then ordered the curtain separating the tent from the canopy to be removed. All were wonder-struck to see the five men standing hale and hearty. The whole area rang with loud applause and thunderous clap of hands.

All the five men were robed in similar new dresses and garlanded and then brought into the assembly. The Guru declared that Baba Nanak had found only one devoted Sikh in Guru Angad, while he had found five such Sikhs. Through the devotion of one true disciple Sikhism had flourished so well. By the consecration of five Sikhs his mission was bound to spread all over the world. He further said that since the time of Guru Nanak the Sikhs took *charanpahul*. The newly initiated Sikhs drank water in which the Guru had dipped his great toe. It developed spirit of humility and meekness. The times had changed. In place of humility and meekness boldness and pluck were required. He would therefore change the form of baptism, and would administer to his warrior Sikhs water stirred with a double-edged dagger in an iron vessel, with continuous recitation of hymns from Adi Granth. In the double-edged dagger Guru Gobind Singh combined the two swords of Miri and Piri of his grandfather into one and would change the name Sikh to Singh or lion. This title previously was exclusively confined to the noble Rajputs, the second military class of Hindus after Kshatriyas. His Singh would look upon himself

[1] Macauliffe, V, 92.
[2] Sarup Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, I, 8.

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as inferior to no other. Every man was a sworn soldier from the time of his baptism. His Singhs would fight against the enemies of their faith and freedom like lions. They would be heroes in this life and would attain salvation and bliss hereafter.[1]

Mata Jito did not like that the five Sikhs who had offered their heads to the Guru should be given plain water. She immediately brought a plate full of sugar cakes (*patashas*), and with the approval of the Guru put them into water. The Guru observed: "We filled the Panth with heroism (*bir-ras*), you have mixed with it love (*prem-ras*)."[2] While stirring water the Guru recited the sacred hymns of the holy Granth. The following five *banis* were recited by the Guru while preparing the amrit or nectar: Guru Nanak's *Japji*, Guru Amar Das's *Anand*, and his own *Jap*, *chaupai* and ten *swayyas*. The five Sikhs were asked to kneel down on their left knees and look into the eyes of the Guru. In this way the Guru's soul power penetrated into their souls. The Guru then gave every one of them five palmfuls of sweet water called Amrit or nectar to drink, and five times was the holy water sprinkled over their heads and faces. They were designated *Panj Pyare* or the five beloved ones. The Guru said that the five beloved ones were his sons.[3] Their mother was Jito. Individually each was called a Singh and collectively they were given the name of Khalsa.[3]

After administering baptism, the Guru stood before these five beloved ones and requested them to baptise him in the same manner. They pleaded their unfitness for such a performance. The Guru replied that he was not superior to his devoted disciples. His superiority lay in one thing. The Guru had attained salvation, *nirwan* or *sachkhand*. while his disciples were in the process of attaining it. The Guru said: "The Khalsa is the Guru and the Guru is the Khalsa. There is no difference between you and me." They baptised him, everyone of the five giving one palmful of nectar and sprinkling it on his head and face turn by turn. He also added Singh to his own name in place of Das and henceforth came to be called Gobind Singh.

[1]Macauliffe, V, 93.

[2]Kalaswalia, 203.

[3]W.L.M'Gregor draws a ludicrous conclusion: "The term Singh, applied by Gooroo Gobind to his followers, may have had reference to the great number of lions infesting the Punjab even in his time." *History of the Sikhs*, I, 23.

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Somebody in the congregation observed: "*Wāh Guru Gobind Singh. āpe Guru te āpe Chelā.*" [Bravo Guru Gobind Singh! himself divine as well as disciple.] This was spiritual socialism. The Guru showed that a perfect disciple was as good as the perfect teacher. He called the Khalsa his own self: Khalsa mero rup hai khās

Khalsa men hau karun niwās

The Guru's Khalsa consisted of both warrior and non-warrior castes. Previously the Rajputs had been created in the same way. Later on Shivaji built a national army out of Marathas of all castes. All these people were raised to the status of Kshatriyas, who formed the ruling and military class. Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa was superior to Rajputs and Marathas because all the four castes were merged into one Kshatriya or warrior class.

Guru Gobind Singh then addressed the Five Beloved ones:

You are now of one creed, followers of one path. You are above all religions, all creeds, all castes, and all classes. You are the immortal soldiers of true dharam. You are the messengers of God. This country's honour and liberty is entrusted to you by Wah Guru. Mix freely with the world, but remain of one soul, one ideal, and one aim. As Baba Nanak and his successors possessed one soul and one mind, so you possess one soul and one mind in the service of Wah Guru, dharam and country. You are the soldiers of God. Today you have taken new birth in the home of the Guru. You are members of the Khalsa brotherhood. Anandpur is your birthplace. Gobind Singh is your father. Jito is your mother. In you four classes have been merged into one. You are all brothers, all equal. No one is superior to the other. Eat from one dish. You are the citizens of Bharatvarsha. Its independence and security is entrusted to you. Work for it with one mind. Success is sure. From today your salutation will be, Wah Guru Ji ka Khalsa, Wah Guru Ji ki Fatah.

Meaning of Khalsa

There are different views about the meaning of Khalsa. Some say that in Persian the word means pure and sincere, and that the Guru had purified his Sikhs after a certain ceremony by a test of steel and called them Singhs or lions. This is the general view which is accepted by almost all historians.

Kavi Churamani Bhai Santokh Singh in *Sri Gur Pratap Suraj Granth*, Rut V Sari and VI Jari, published by Khalsa Samachar in March, 1933, on page 5608 in a footnote gives the following meaning of Khalsa.

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Kha means yog or jap, *l* means bhog mahin, and *Sa* means sagarhane majh or ikath or mel. Thus Khalsa implied *yog+bhog+mel* or spirituality, worldly enjoyment and unity, all combined into one.

As a matter of fact the Guru wished to inspire his Singhs with the conviction that while engaged in the service of the *Panth* (community) and the country God was always present with them. For this purpose he made full use of the number five.

The number five has always been a sacred one in India from time immemorial. The best form of self-government provided by ancient sages was Panchayat or a council of five, *Panchon men Parmeshwar* (God is present in the council of chosen five) was the famous saying in those days, The village administration in this country based on this principle survived unpolluted through all the upheavals of history. Guru Nanak also laid emphasis on number five. In *Japji* he says:

Panch paṛwān, panch pardhān,
Panche pāwen dargāh mān,
Panche so hain dar rājān,
Panchan ka Gur ek dhayān.

Each Guru offered his successor five paise with a coconut or Bel fruit followed by five circumbulations around him, in token of his becoming the next Guru. Sawa rupaya, Sawa man, sawa sau, sawa lakh, each consisting of five quarters is common in Sikh terminology.

Guru Gobind Singh made the best use of this spiritual sentiment. According to Giani Kartar Singh Kalaswalia in *Sri Guru Dashmesh Prakash*, Guruji sent from Paonta five Sikhs to Kashi to study Sanskrit. He built five forts at Anandpur. He selected five beloved ones at Anandpur. He read five *banis* while preparing *amrit*. He administered to each of them five palmfuls of *amrit* or holy water.

With a view to giving the Singhs an optimistic view of life in the midst of trials and tribulations which lay ahead of them, the Guru gave them a unique form of salutation:

Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa,
Wah Guru ji ki Fatah.[1]

[The Khalsa is thine, O Lord! So does the victory belong to you.] Each half of this salutation again consists of five words. By this mode of salutation a strong link was established between the Khalsa and Victory, these two being the offspring of the Lord.

[1]The word Wah Guru is used in *Puratan Janam Sakhi*, 23. It says Guru Nanak used it. McLeod, op. cit., 41.

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Guru Gobind Singh was in search of a word which could have the sanctity of five and the presence of God. Persian was the language of the elite and the Guru was himself a great scholar of Persian language and literature. He adopted the word Khalsa for his Singhs because it fulfilled both the conditions in the most appropriate manner. Besides this word had already been used by Guru Hargobind for his Sikhs. In Persian script Khalsa consists of five letters:

(i) *Khe* or Kh stands for *Khud* or oneself

(ii) *Alif* or A represents Akal Purkh, Allah or God.

(iii) *Lām* or L signifies Labbaik. *The New Royal Persian-English Dictionary*,[1] gives its meaning as follows: "What do yon want with me? Here I am. What would you have?"

(iv) *Swād* or S alludes to Sahib or Lord or Master.

(v) It ends with either A or H. *Alif* or A points to *Azadi* or freedom. If written with HI or Has it is generally the case, it refers to Huma, a legendary bird. Every head it overshades, in time wears a crown.

The word Khalsa, therefore, has the sacredness of number five as well as the presence of God with his Singhs both engaged in a pleasant conversation. God Himself asks the Singhs:

"What do you want from me? Here am I. What would you have?" The Singhs reply: "Lord! give us liberty."

The formula of five into five

For the guidance of his Singhs, Guru Gobind Singh prescribed a formula consisting of five principles each governed by five rules. The five principles were: Five beliefs, five symbols, five vows, five deliverances and five rules of conduct.

1. *Five beliefs*: The Khalsa were enjoined to have five-fold belief in God (Akalpurkh), Guru, Granth, Greeting—*Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa*, *Wah Guru ji ki Fatah*, and Guru Nanak's *Japji*.

2. *Five symbols*: In those days Hindus of respectable families wore five ornaments: gold ear-rings, a necklace, gold or silver bangles, finger ring and a waist belt of gold or silver or a *tāgri*. The wearer felt proud of displaying his superior social position. At the same time he ran the risk of losing these articles as well as his life into the bargain.

Guru Gobind Singh provided to his followers five jewels which were within reach of everybody down to the poorest peasant and the

[1]Bhai Nand Lal, *Rahit Nama*, 2.

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lowest labourer. Instead of creating fear in the mind of the wearer, his five jewels made his Singh bold, brave and awe-inspiring. These jewels were *kesh* or long hair, *kanghā* or comb, *kirpān* or dagger, *karā* or steel bracelet and *kachhā* or a pair of knickerbockers. These symbols gave the Khalsa a semblance of unity, close brotherhood and equality. They developed group consciousness. Guru Gobind Singh gave the Khalsa a new uniform. This was the spiritual uniform which at once lifted one to the realm divine. Besides the Guru wanted his followers not to be able to hide their identity and face danger boldly, and to remain united in close affinity.

Bhai Nand Lal wrote:

Nishān-e-Sikhi ast īn panj harf kaf
Hargiz na bāshad azīn panj muāf·
Kara, karad kachhā, kangha bi dān,
Bina kes hech ast jumla nishan.

[These five letters of K are emblems of Sikhism. These five are most incumbent,
Steel bangle, big knife, shorts and a comb;
Without unshorn hair the other four are of no significance.]

The Bhai further recorded:

Hoe Sikh sar topi dhare
Sāt Janam Kushti hoe mare

[A Sikh who wears a cap,
will be a leper in seven births].

Several arguments are advanced in favour of unshorn hair, beards and moustaches:

1. That it was a general practice with Hindu sages and ascetics and Kshatriya princes to keep long hair tied in a knot on top and flowing beard, and that Guru Gobind Singh wanted his disciples, in spite of their being house-holders, to be *karam yogis* or practical saints like Rama, Krishna and Bharata or the Five Pandavas.

2. That the warlike tribesmen of the North-West Frontier kept long hair though trimmed, and that the Guru wished his followers to have a similarly impressive and alarming appearance.

3. That the Guru adopted the practice of Goddess Durga of preserving long locks unshorn.

4. That the previous Gurus also kept long hair and Gobind Singh wanted his Singhs to develop like Gurus.

5. The most reasonable explanation is that Guru Gobind Singh desired to provide his Khalsa a natural military uniform, the least

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expensive and most impressive permanent costume. Besides he deemed it necessary that their heads should be properly guarded from sword cuts and *lathi* blows by means of long hair and turbans very few people at the time could comprehend fully the meaning and importance of this measure. It had taken real brain to invent it.

Comb indicated cleanliness and purity. Steel bracelet developed an iron will and grit, and destroyed the effects of misfortune. It was a permanent substitute of *rakhri*, a thread tied by sisters on the wrists of brothers, reminding them of their duty to help and protect them. Similarly the *kaṛa* served as a reminder to the Sikhs that they had promised to be true to the Guru and the Panth and that promise must be kept at all costs.

Dagger depicted power and prestige. Wearing arms was the privilege and pride of only Kshatriyas and Rajputs. The Khalsa was lifted to the status of Kshatriyas, Rajputs and princes. The pair of knicker-bockers aimed at agility and frugality. It was more convenient for fighting than the long *dhoti* of Hindus and loose trousers of Muslims. Thus the five symbols of Guru Gobind Singh gave strength to the body, mind and soul and developed an integrated personality of the wearer.

3. *Five vows*: The Khalsa were required not to do five things: (a) to shave or cut hair, (b) to smoke,[1] (c) to eat *halâl* meat of the animal killed in the Muslim style, (d) to wear a cap and, (e) to worship tombs, graves and relics of cremation and cherish superstitions.[3]

4. *Five deliverances*: Guru Gobind Singh declared the following five deliverances for his disciples.

(i) *Dharam Nash* or freedom from previous religious practices and customs.[4]

(ii) *Karam Nash* or the obliteration of the past bad deeds.

(iii) *Janam Nash* or the giving up the family influences and caste

[1]The Guru said: "Wine is bad, bhang destroyeth one generation, but tobacco destroyeth all generations." (Macauliffe, V, 153). Santokh Singh says that the tobacco leaf resembles the ear of a cow, and so the Guru prohibited its use. *Suraj Prakash*, 5571, fn.

[2]Bhai Nand Lal *Rahit Nama*, 2 "Gor marhi mat bhūl na māne." (Worship not even by mistake a tomb or a relic of cremation).

[3]Phokat dharam na kauri kaman Bhagat. Lakshman Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 3.

[4]Macauliffe, V, 110.

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effects. The Guru explained that all the four Hindu castes had been blended into the Khalsa like the betel leaf. When mixed with *supari* (betel nut), *katha* (catechu) and *chuna* (lime), the leaf reddened lips, strengthened teeth, gave flavour to mouth and added heat to the body. Individually none of these things could produce this effect. Similarly the four Hindu castes when united would change them into a flower possessing beauty, bloom, fragrance and freshness. All the castes were blended on a democratic basis in which all were equal and nobody was higher or lower.

(iv) *Sharam Nash* or the disappearance of hereditary professional distinctions, as all the callings like those of priests, soldiers, traders, weavers, tailors, barbers, cobblers and sweepers were given equal respect and status.

(v) *Bharam Nash* or discarding the rituals prescribed by previous castes.

5. *Five rules of conduct*: Five rules were laid down for the general observance of the Sikhs:

(i) Before beginning every work or enterprise prayer should be offered.

(ii) The Sikhs should help one another and serve the Panth.

(iii) They should practise riding and using arms.

(iv) A Sikh coveting another's property would go to hell.

(v) Regarding sexual matters the Guru said that his father Guru Tegh Bahadur had given him these instructions which should serve as a guide to the Sikhs:

"O son, as long as there is life in thy body, make this thy sacred duty ever to love thine own wife more and more. Approach not another woman's couch either by mistake or even in a dream. Know, that the love of another's wife is a sharp dagger. Believe me death entereth the body by making love to another's wife. They who think it great cleverness to enjoy another's wife, shall in the end, die the death of dogs."

The Guru declared:

"*Par nāri ki sej,*
bhūl supne hun nā jāiyo."

[Go not ye, even in dream, to the bed of a woman other than your own wife.]

Abolition of the institution of masands

Immediately after the creation of the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh

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took another momentous decision in regard to the institution of masands. The third Guru, Amar Das, 1552–1574, had organised his Sikh territorially into twenty-two districts. They were called *manjis* because the priest in charge of the district sat on a cot, while all others were seated on the floor. These missionaries were called Sangatias. During the pontificate of Guru Ram Das, 1574–1581, they were called Ram Das after the name of the Guru. The fifth Guru, Arjan, 1581–1606, put a Sikh of status in charge of each district. He called him by the dignified term of Masand. It was the Panjabi form of the Persian word Musannad or an elevated man of grace and dignity. The Masands collected one-tenth or *daswandh* of the income of each Sikh living in the area of their jurisdiction, and presented it to the Guru on the occasion of Baisakhi and Diwali, twice a year.

The Masand system worked well in the beginning at least up to the time of the sixth Guru, Hargobind. The seventh Guru, Har Rae, died at the age of thirty-one. Out of this short life he lived at Nahan for twelve years. The eighth Guru Har Krishan died at the age of eight. The ninth Guru Tegh Bahadur lived outside Panjab for many years. and when he came back, he was involved in a conflict with the Government and was shortly afterwards executed. The central control having been loose and weak the Masands became independent to all intents and purposes. They began to gather riches and power for themselves, and became corrupt, selfish, profligate and cruel. Frequent complaints were pouring in against their misbehaviour. They treated the Sikhs with scorn, and persecuted them. They had courtesans in their harems. They demanded the hands of the daughters of the Sikhs for their servants and sycophants. They extorted from them good food, good beds and full service. They let loose their horses into the green and ripe fields of the Sikhs.[1]

They were also adopting a defiant attitude towards the Guru. They retained a larger part of the offerings for themselves. They opposed the Guru's Ranjit Nagara, the huge kettledrum beaten every morning and evening at Anandpur. They exerted pressure upon Gobind Singh to lend his elephant and the tent to the Raja of Bilaspur. They often boasted that the Guru's power and prestige was mainly due to their work of preaching and procuring money.[2]

In *Bachitra Natak* the Guru condemns the Masands thus:

[1]Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 24-25.
[2]Macauliffe, IV, 316-17; V, 5, 11, 12, 23, 84, 86.

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Jo Bābe ke dām na dai hain
Tin te gah Babar ke lai hain
Dai dai tin ko bari sajāi
Pun lahen greh loot banāi.[1]

[Those who do not pass on the offerings received for Baba, would be seized by the successors of Babar; Severe punishments would be inflicted upon them. Their houses would be ransacked.]

One day a company of mimics appeared at Guru Gobind Singh's durbar. One of them was dressed as a *masand* and was seated on horseback. Another disguised as a courtesan rode behind him. Two men acted as *masand's* servants and walked behind him. They entered the house of a poor Sikh who received them most respectfully. Clean beds were prepared for them. Fresh bread and pulse was offered to eat. The bread was thrown into the Sikh's face and pulse was flung on the floor. The poor host was forced to borrow sweets and serve the party with rice-milk. His wife was obliged to shampoo the dancing girl. The *masand* then demanded his young daughter to be married to one of his servants. The Guru was deeply shocked to see all this.[2]

The immediate attack on *masands* is a tribute to Guru's determination and boldness. Once he was convinced of an evil thing, he did away with it without caring for any consequences. In his *Hukam Namas* addressed to various *sangats* he insisted again and again not to give any *masand*, man or woman, any offering. He sternly advised the Khalsa to bring the offerings personally or to send them by a reliable messenger of their own.

On this occasion Guru Gobind Singh abolished this institution. Most of the Masands were present there. The notorious ones were severely punished, while others had to pay fines.[3]

The *Akhbarat-e-Durbar-e-Mualla* or a newsletter of the Mughal court dated May 13, 1710 stated: "Guru Gobind Singh had summarily dismissed the masands long ago."[4] This measure not only freed the Sikhs from humiliation but also restored a close personal contact between the Guru and his disciples.

[1]Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*, I, 174-75; Latif, *Panjab*, 273.

[2]Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 24-25; Khazan Singh, I, 174-75; Macauliffe, IV, 316:17; V, 5, 11, 12, 28, 84, 86.

[3]*Bachitra Natak*, Section XIII, Chaupai, 10.

[4]Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, V, 84; *Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 293-95.

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He issued strict instructions to the Sikhs not to pay anything to the Masands, but make their offerings to the Guru directly while visiting him. Those Sikhs who gave money to Masands were placed under a curse:

Jab hawai hai be mukh binā dhan
Tab charhi hain Sikhan kah māngan
Je je Sikh tin ain dhan dai hain
Loot Malechh tin u hau lai hain.[1]

[When these disloyal persons become paupers, they go to the Sikhs to beg. Those Sikhs who give them money, shall be plundered by the Muslims.]

In *Chaupais* 12 to 15 the Guru says he will not forgive them, and God also will not own them.

The Guru issued strict injunctions to the Sikhs not to take pahul from masands. He permitted any five baptised Khalsa to administer pahul to any number of men anywhere.

Admonition to princes

Besides the Sikhs, a large number of hill Rajputs and the Rajput princes of the neighbourhood had gathered there to see what the Guru was doing. After creating the Khalsa, the Guru addressed them:

"How has your religious, political and social status deteriorated ! You have abandoned the worship of the true God and addressed your devotions to gods, goddesses, rivers, trees, etc. Through ignorance you know not how to govern your territories; through indolence and vice you disregard the interests of your subjects. You place over them officials who not only hate you, but are besides your mortal enemies. In your quarrels regarding caste and lineage you have not adhered to the ancient divisions of Hinduism into four sections, but you have made hundreds of sub-sections and subordinate minor castes. You despise and loath one another through your narrow prejudices, and you act contrary to the wishes of the great Almighty Father. Your morals have become so perverted that through fear and with a desire to please your Musalman rulers, you give them your daughters to gratify their lust. Self-respect hath found no place in your thoughts, and you have forgotten the history of your sires. I am intensely concerned for your fallen state. Are you not ashamed to call yourselves Rajputs when the

[1] *Bachitra Natak*, Section XIII, Chaupai 11.

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Musalmans seize your wives and daughters before your very eyes? Your temples have been demolished and mosques built on their sites; and many of your faith have been forcibly converted to Islam. If you still possess a trace of bravery and of the ancient spirit of your race, then listen to my advice, embrace the Khalsa religion, and gird up your loins to elevate the fallen condition of your country."[1]

Parable of donkey

After the creation of the Khalsa, a large number of Sikhs stayed at Anandpur to get baptism and to enjoy the company of the youthful Guru who was then 32. A Sikh presented a tiger's skin to Guru Gobind Singh. In the evening stroll the Guru saw a donkey grazing in a field. He left two Sikhs to keep a watch on the donkey's movements. In the night the tiger's skin was fastened on the donkey. Early next morning people raised an alarm. The whole population was terrified. Nobody dared to stir out of his house. The Guru collected his Sikhs, approached the donkey and removed the tiger's skin. The Guru then said: You should be Khalsa from within and without and should not behave like the disguised donkey. Your persecutors are outwardly like lions, but inwardly they are cowards. Face them boldly, and they will be beaten.

Significance of the creation of the Khalsa

1. The creation of the Khalsa was an epoch-making event in the religious and political history of the country. It marked the beginning of the rise of a new people, destined to play the role of a hero against all oppression and tyranny. The severities of the high caste people over their brethren, the Shudras, were set at naught as soon as one joined the ranks of the Khalsa, where all were equal and ready to render one another every help and useful service. Their only difficulty lay in destroying the organised oppression of tyrannical despotism of the Mughal Government. It was a gigantic task for the small community of the Khalsa. Under the direction of the Guru, the Khalsa took up the profession of arms and the results were most surprising. The people, lowliest of the low, who had lived for centuries under complete servility now turned into doughty warriors, the praises of whose physique and valour were sung by the whole world including their bitterest foes. The Guru's assertion made on this occasion was fully justified:

[1]Macauliffe, V, 100-101; *Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 217-24.

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"Chiṛyân kolon bāz marāwân,
Tān main Gobind nām kahāwān."

[Call me by the name of Gobind only if I succeed in making sparrows kill hawks.]

The Muslim officials called Hindus sparrows and themselves hawks. As a hawk cuts a sparrow to pieces, so they would cut Hindus to pieces. The Guru gave a reply to their claim in this couplet.

Its implication was that his Khalsa though poor, unarmed and as docile and innocent as sparrows would destroy the hawks or the Mughal rulers and the foreigners whose constant stream had been running from the north-west across the Panjab to Delhi and other places for seven hundred years.

2. Formerly the religious leadership of the Sikhs outside the headquarters was in the hands of Jats. Mohsin Fani wrote: "The leading Masands of the Guru are mostly Jats." Being aggressive and uncompromising by nature and temperament, Guru Nanak's religion had not made desirable progress. Guru Gobind Singh realized that they were best suited for the profession of arms. Hence by abolishing the institution of *masands* he diverted the Jat leadership from religion to militarism. They were a sturdy race of men who were as dexterous in plying sword as a ploughshare. Thus Guru Gobind Singh's militant religion made a rapid rise. Within a short space of time a strong military class sprang up in Panjab.

3. The Guru declared himself equal with his five beloved ones. He considered them even superior to himself when he took baptism at their hands. It was pure and genuine democracy. It represented spirit of the Glorious Revolution in Britain which had taken place ten years earlier in 1689. It had demolished the theory of the divine rights of kingship.

4. Further, the foundation of the Khalsa implied that the people had the divine right to overthrow a tyrannical government, and establish in its place a government of their own choice. In this doctrine the Guru anticipated the Declaration of Rights by the thirteen American colonies in 1776.

5. The Guru gave the Khalsa the social ideal of equality and close brotherhood. There was to be no distinction of birth, caste, class or colour. All were equal in social status, and had the same rights and privileges. He thus enunciated ninety years earlier the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity which formed the bedrock of French Revolution.

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CHAPTER 15

The Post-Khalsa Battles, 1699-1705

Guru Gobind Singh had to fight twelve battles after the creation of the Khalsa. Of these six took place at Anandpur, and the rest at Nirmohgarh, Bhadsali, Kiratpur, Sarsa, Chamkaur and Khidrana or Muktsar. The Khalsa took readily to the sword straight from the plough and sickle and fought with the trained and professional soldiers as bravely as they had battled with all the potent forces of nature. We find these people loyal to their leader, faithful to their word, fond of the country, fond of their wives and children. looking upon treason and impurity as the greatest of crimes. These men were rough, strong and uncultivated, and offered a fierce and protracted resistance under the inspiration of Guru Gobind Singh. Their work was not war for its own sake, but to slay the dragon, the devouring enemy of their faith.

First battle of Anandpur, 1699

The hill rajas were very much perturbed at the growing power of the Guru. The Khalsa, a militant force, created by the Guru, had given them a fright. They were of the view that in course of time the Khalsa would eliminate them. They were also pressed from Delhi to get the Guru evacuated from their territory. Emperor Aurangzeb also had issued orders to his Governors in Panjab to crush the power of the Guru. Macauliffe says that the Viceroy of Delhi despatched a force of ten thousand men under his two generals Paindah Khan and Din Beg. The hill chiefs joined them at Rupar. The Guru met the enemy near Anandpur. In a severe scuffle Paindah Khan was killed. Din Beg and the hill Rajas fled away. They were pursued by the Khalsa for some distance. A large booty in the form of horses, arms and baggage fell into the hands of the Sikhs.[1]

[1]*The Sikh Religion*, V, 124-26.

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Second battle of Anandpur, 1699

After this defeat the hill rajas formed a coalition and decided to act in concert with one another independently of the Mughals. Bhim Chand of Bilaspur became their leader. He sent a message to the Guru to vacate Anandpur as it lay in his territory and settle somewhere else or face the Rajas' army.

Sainapat says :

Bhej diyo likh kai oh ne,
Ab Chhoro Guru ji Bhûm hamâri,
Kai kachhu dãm dayã kar dev,
Kai yudh karo.[3]

[He sent a message in writing. Guruji, vacate our land, or pay tri-tribute or fight.]

Finding that Gobind Singh would not submit, they marched upon Anandpur. Kesari Chand of Jaswan led the vanguard. The Guru addressing his Sikhs said: "O Khalsa! I am ever your companion and succourer. If you die fighting, you shall enjoy all the happiness reserved for martyrs, and if you survive and gain the victory, empire shall be yours". The Guru distributed among them bows and arrows, daggers, swords, lances, scimitars, spears, pistols and muskets. In the day's fighting the Sikhs stuck fast to their ground. The Rajas of Kangra, Mandi and Bilaspur were for peace, while those of Hindur and Jaswan wanted war. The siege lasted for two months. Kesari Chand of Jaswan and Ghamand Chand of Kangra lost their lives. The survivors fled away.[1]

The battle of Nirmohgarh, 1700

After some time a strong contingent of Mughal army was seen advancing towards Anandpur. The Guru intercepted it at Nirmohgarh, a village situated about 4 kms away from Anandpur. Some hill chiefs also joined the Mughals. But they were repulsed.[2]

The battle of Bhadsali, 1700

Sometime later Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, appeared on the scene, and assumed command himself. His strategy was successful. The Sikhs suffered defeat and left Anandpur. They could not return to Anandpur as all the passages on that side were blocked. The

[1]Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, 49.
[2]Macauliffe, V, 128-37.
[3]Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, Harnam Singh, 47-48.

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Guru retreated towards Bhadsali. It lay 45 kms from Anandpur beyond Una across river Swān, 18 kms away on the Una-Hoshiarpur road. The enemy pursued the Sikhs. Another engagement took place at Bhadsali, in which Sahib Singh, a notable Sikh commander, lost his life.

Thān Bhisāli men kie
Ketak din bisrām
Khelan chaṛhe shīkār ko
Pher kiyo saranjām.[1]

After some time when the Guru found that all of his enemies had gone home and no guard was kept in the neighbourhood of Anandpur, he quietly returned to his headquarters.

Phir basyo Anandgarh
Rājan māni ān[2]

Mata Sahib Devi episode

Sahib Devi was the daughter of Ram Basi, Rawa Khatri of Basi Rawan near Rohtas in Pakistan. From childhood she had vowed to be the wife of Guru Gobind Singh. After the death of Mata Jito her father presented her to Guru's mother. The Guru refused to marry a third time. The girl refused to go back. The Guru accepted her on the condition that she would not have any conjugal relationship, but she was declared the mother of the Khalsa. The marriage took place on April 15, 1700. She accompanied the Guru to Nander and returned to Delhi after the Guru's demise. She lived with Mata Sundari and died about 1750.

Visit lo Riwalsar and Mandi 1701[3]

The hill rajas realized the futility of continuing hostility with Gobind Singh. They made peace and invited him to attend a fair at Riwalsar[4], a holy place of Hindus and Buddhists. It is famous for a couple of floating islands and lies 16 kilometres from Mandi. The Guru visited this place in the company of his mother Gujari, his wives Sundari and Sahib Devi, all of his four sons, and a body of chosen Sikhs. Many hill rajas who had collected there received him warmly.[5]

[1]ibid, 55-57, 62-65.
[2]ibid, 138-42.
[3]This date is given by Khazan Singh. See also Santokh Singh, 5423, fn.
[4]A great fair is held at Riwalsar every year on the first of Baisakh.
[5]Santokh Singh, *Suraj Granth*, Amritsar, 1933, pp. 5414-23.

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He paid a visit to Mandi. Raja Sidh Sen (1684-1727) offered him a cordial reception. The Raja asked the Guru for a boon that his capital Mandi should never be conquered by an enemy. The Guru got a small earthen vessel (hāndi) and threw it into the river Beas on the banks of which stands the town of Mandi. The vessel did not break. The Guru observed:

Jaise bachi meri handi
Waise bachegi teri Mandi;
Mandi ko jab lutenge
To āsmāni gole chhutenge.[1]

[As my earthen vessel is safe, so will be safe your Mandi. When Mandi is plundered, heavenly balls will be fired.]

The third battle of Anandpur, 170?

Two Mughal commanders, Sayyid Beg and Alif Khan, were going from Lahore to Delhi. They had a force of about five thousand men. Bhim Chand of Bilaspur who had not reconciled himself to the Guru persuaded the generals to help him in expelling Gobind Singh from his territory on a payment of one thousand rupees a day. Alif Khan had already fought in the Kangra hills, and had a grievance against the Guru. Differences arose between the commanders. After a couple of skirmishes Sayyid Beg parted company with Alif Khan and joined Gobind Singh. This disheartened Alif Khan who retired.[2]

The fourth battle of Anandpur, 1703

Bhim Chand was not the man to lose heart easily. He got ready for another trial and succeeded in winning over to his cause, the neighbouring chiefs like Raja Bhup Chand, Raja Wazir Singh and Raja Dev Saran. They marched upon Anandpur. The Sikhs met them outside the town. A tough battle was fought as a result of which the hill rajas again fell back and dispersed.[3]

The fifth battle of Anandpur, 1703

Bhim Chand again sought help from the Mughal viceroy at Delhi.

[1]Lepel Griffin, *Rajas of the Punjab*,580-81; Hutchison and Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, II, 389; Santokh Singh, *Sri Guru Pratap Suraj Granth*, 5414-23; Macauliffe, V, 145-47; Ranbir, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 96.

[2]Macauliffe, V, 153-54.

[3]Ibid. 154-56.

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In course of time a strong force was despatched. The Guru came to know of it when it had arrived at Thanesar. He put his defences in order and organised whatever troops he had. Sayyid Beg stood firm on the side of the Guru. Another Muslim noble Maiman Khan joined Guru. The combined troops of the Mughals and the hill rajas invested Anandpur. In the contest one hill chief and Sayyid Beg were killed. Enemy forces fought so hard that they drove the Sikhs out of Anandpur and plundered the town. The Sikhs returned, fell upon heavily laden enemy troops, retrieved their position and recovered Anandpur.[1] In *Khalsa Mahma* Guru Gobind Singh praises the Khalsa thus:

"It is through the kindness of the Sikhs that I have won all my victories and have been able to grant gifts to others. It is through their favour that I have acquired knowledge and my enemies have been exterminated. Through their favour have I acquired honour otherwise there are millions of ordinary mortals like myself. It is a great pleasure for me to serve them, no other service pleaseth my heart. To grant gifts to them is the right thing, to grant gifts to others seemeth of no avail to me. To bestow gifts on them beareth fruit in the next world and bringeth honour in this, to bestow them on others is of no use at all. Let my body, my mind, my head, my wealth and all that is mine be dedicated to their service"[2]

Aurangzeb's personal interest in the affair

These continuous repulses disheartened the Mughal Governments of Delhi, Sarhind, Lahore and Jammu as well as the rajas of Kangra hills. They wrote to Aurangzeb warning him against the growing power of Guru Gobind Singh. They stated that the Emperor's conquests in Deccan might lead to the loss of North-Western India from Delhi to Kabul. They invited him to take command against the Guru personally and destroy his power root and branch. This upset Aurangzeb. He issued strict instructions to his governors and the hill rajas. He suggested that the Guru should be compelled to evacuate Anandpur either by force or by fraud and then he should either be captured or killed. He despatched a personal letter to the Guru holding out a mild threat. He wrote:

"There is only one Emperor. Thy religion and mine are the same. Come to me, by all means, otherwise I shall be angry and go to thee.

[1]Macauliffe V, 156, 162-64.
[2]Narain Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh Retold*, 229.

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If thou come, thou shalt be treated as holy men are treated by monarchs. I have obtained this sovereignty from God. Be well advised and thwart not my wishes."[1]

The letter was brought by a Qazi to whom the Guru handed over the following reply:

"My brother, the Sovereign who hath made thee emperor hath sent me into the world to do justice. He hath commissioned thee also to do justice, but thou hast forgotten His mandate and practisest hypocrisy. Wherefore how can I be on good terms with thee who pursuest the Hindus with blind hatred? Thou recognisest not that the people belong to God and not to the Emperor, and yet thou seekest to destroy their religion."[2]

The battle of Kiratpur, 1704

In September, 1704, the Mughal forces from Delhi and Sarhind and of the rajas of Kangra hills, Muslim chiefs, jagirdars, Ranghars and Gujars of the neighbourhood advanced from the Rupar side to attack Anandpur. Guru Gobind Singh marched to Kiratpur to check the enemy. According to Muhammad Akbar "a fierce battle took place near Kiratpur. Although the Sikhs are said to have fought very desperately, yet they were driven back and the Guru had to take refuge in the fort of Anandpur."[3]

The sixth and last battle of Anandpur, 1704

In this exigency the Guru invited help from his Sikhs. He issued several letters, of which only one is quoted below:

"Sri Guru ji ki āgya hai, Bhai Sukhya, Bhai Mukhya, Bhai Parsa. Sarbat sangat Guru rakhega. Guru, Guru japna, janam sanwaregā. Sarbat sangat mera Khalsa hai. Aswār, payāde, bandūqchi, bhale bhale jawan sāth lai ke Huzūr āwnā Jo Sikh putar darshan āwegā, so nihāl hug; us dā khasmānā hug; bahori hug. Guru Baba sabhe manorath pure karega. Dars nit. Samat 1761."[4]

[Sri Guru ji addresses the letter to Bhai Sukhya, Bhai Mukhya, Bhai Parsa. The Guru would take care of all his disciples. Repeat

[1]Macauliffe, V, 165.

[2]ibid.

[3]Muhammad Akbar, *The Punjab under the Mughals*, 219.

[4]Akhbarat-e-Durbar-e-Muala, dated May 13, 1710, quoted by Ganda Singh in his *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, I, 83 ; Sainapat, 1925, pp. 58-64.

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Guru, Guru. You will have the best in life. The entire community is my Khalsa. Come with cavaliers, footmen, gunners and daring youth. Every Sikh young man coming to pay respects would be blessed with prosperity. He would flourish fully well. The Guru would fulfil all their desires. Come for a *darshan*. 1704 AD.]

The Guru divided his army into six contingents, each roughly consisting of 500 men. They were placed in five forts, while a detachment of 500 men was kept in reserve. Anandgarh was in Guru's personal charge. Fatahgarh was entrusted to Udai Singh. Holgarh was in command of Mohkam Singh. Guru's eldest son Ajit Singh controlled Keshgarh. His other son Jujhar Singh held Lohgarh. Ajit Singh won a great victory on the very first day by killing Jagatullah, leader of Ranghars and Gujars.[1]

The Guru had mounted two heavy guns named Bāghan or tigress and Vijayghosh or victory-warrant on his fort. They were brought into action and they wrought a havoc in the enemy ranks. In the first day's fight Wazir Khan lost nine hundred men. The siege was conducted with great intensity. All means of ingress and egress were completely cut off. As the provisions were running short, price of eatables rose very high. Flour was selling at two rupees a kilogram in Anandpur. The civilian population being hard pressed began to flee. Scarcity also prevailed in the Guru's camp. Each soldier was supplied one hundred grams of flour daily. Soon provisions were completely exhausted. The Khalsa lived on leaves and bark of trees. Water supply from the channel was cut off. Generally four men were sent to fetch one bucket of water, Two men fought the enemy. One carried the bucket and the other defended him.

Char Singh Pāni nu jāwan,
Do jūjan te do pāni liāwan.

The Jats of Majha made up their minds to go home. The Guru would not permit them to leave. When they persisted, they were asked to give in writing that they were not the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh. Only 40 of them put their thumb impression on the disclaimer and retired.

The enemy on seeing this state of affairs delivered a vehement assault on one part of the town. "Bullets and arrows poured from both sides, and the Sikhs being now reduced in numbers had to retreat. The Turks and hillmen inflicted great damage on them as they did so,

[1]Ganda Singh, *Hukamname*, Guru's Hukam Namah, no. 60, p. 181

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and took from them a large quantity of booty."[1] On a report being made "the Guru said they ought to feel no pleasure in the possession of wealth which was not permanent, and no sorrow at its departure."[2] A small hilly channel taken off from Charan Ganga supplied water to Anandpur. Bhim Chand diverted its course. The provisions had almost been finished and the inmates lived on whatever they could get. A foraging party of the Sikhs was ambushed and completely destroyed. There were daily desertions in the Sikh camp.

Taking advantage of this situation Wazir Khan formed a plan to capture the Guru alive and send him to Aurangzeb to win his pleasure and goodwill. He opened negotiations with the Guru promising safe evacuation. Many Sikhs who were starving welcomed this overture. They requested Gobind Singh's mother to exert pressure on the Guru to accept the offer. She said: "My son, this is a propitious offer. Take us with thee and leave Anandpur. I am thy mother, and I ask thee to obey me and seek shelter elsewhere. Thus shalt thou restore life to thy starving Sikhs."[3] The Guru replied that he would not place any reliance on the enemy's assurances and offered to prove it. He sent a message that he would convey his property first under proper guard, and asked for a number of bullock carts and pack mules. These were immediately supplied. The Guru filled sacks with rotten things such as worn-out shoes, dirty clothes, broken vessels. All the riff-raff was wrapped in velvet pieces and loaded on mules and oxen. The enemy immediately fell on the animals and started looting the property. The guard rushed back inside the town.[4]

Wazir Khan expressed regret for the misconduct of some of his troops and produced an autograph letter of Aurangzeb as a guarantee for his assurances:

"I have sworn on *The Quran* not to harm thee. If I do, may I not find a place in God's court hereafter. Cease warfare and come to me. If thou desire not to come hither, then go wheresoever thou pleasest.

Aurangzeb's envoy added:

"O Guru, all who go to the Emperor's court praise thee. On that account the Emperor feeleth certain that an interview with you will

[1]Koer Singh, 155, 157; Muhammad Akbar, 215.
[2]Macauliffe, V, 175.
[3]ibid.
[4]ibid, 168-76.

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add to his happiness. He has sworn by Muhammad and called God to witness that he will not harm thee. The hill rajas have also sworn by the cow and called their idols to witness that they will allow thee safe conduct. Bear not in mind anything that hath occurred. The attack on thine oxen was not prompted by any raja. The attackers have been generally punished, and the ring-leaders are in prison. No one now, O True Guru, dareth do thee any harm; wherefore evacuate the fort, at any rate for the present, and come with me to the Emperor. Thou mayest afterwards do what thou pleasest."[1]

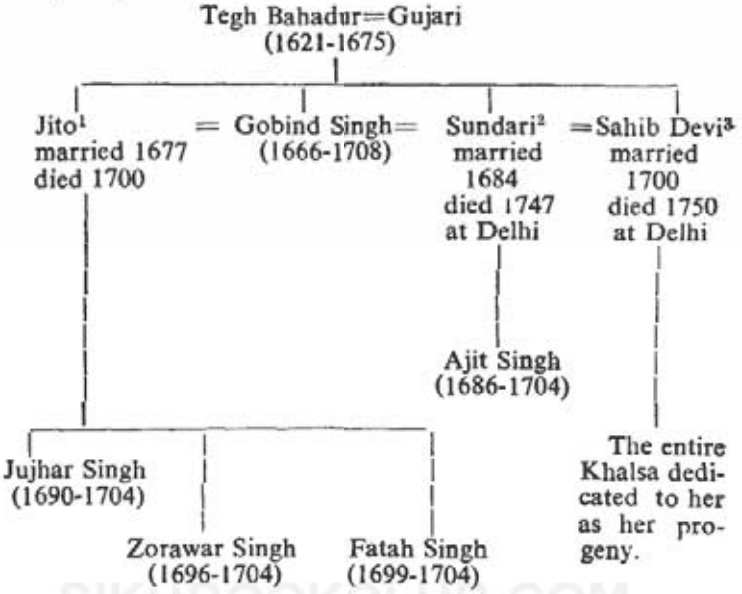
On hearing this the Sikhs again pressed the Guru to accept capitulation. The Guru's mother supported them. Finding the Guru unyielding desertions became widespread.[2] Guru's mother got ready to leave with her two youngest grandsons to whom she was very much attached. The desertions of some of his followers had failed to damp his spirit. But he could not disobey his mother, come what may. When a man is at war, and is constantly facing death, he rises above his ordinary self. All the trashy stuff peels off him, like the dead skin after a burn. Then only the kernel, the real man is left. He is then endowed with a mighty strength. The Guru also knew that brave men were killed less frequently than cowards.

In this desperate state of affairs the Guru reluctantly agreed to evacuate Anandpur. He destroyed a lot of movable property, buried some underground, and took the most valuable baggage with him. It was the sixth day of the moonlit night when it would set by 8 o'clock. The evacuation began at dead of night– December 20-21, 1704.[3] The entire camp was divided into two parts. The Guru's mother, wives, two youngest sons and other women of the household together with all the manuscripts prepared by the Guru and his scholars left in the first batch. Udai Singh, the bravest commander of the Guru, was put in charge of this party at the head of two hundred armed horsemen. The Guru had given them a letter for the Raja of Nahan requesting him to give shelter to his family.[4] They were to follow the direct road to Rupar, and he would try to join them on the way as soon as possible. It was raining and a swift cold wind was blowing.

[1]Santokh Singh, 5819-22.
[2]Macauliffe, V, 179; Santokh Singh, 5823-26.
[3]Santokh Singh, 5834-38.
[4]ibid, 5838-41.

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The Guru's family



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The battle at Bachhora Sahib on the river Sarsa, 21 December, 1704

The river Sarsa, a tributary of the Satluj, usually almost dry had come down as a mighty torrent after heavy rain in the hills. Then it could not be crossed. There was nothing for it but to wait on the bank till it ran itself out and went down. The first batch waited on its bank for the Guru's arrival.

Guru Gobind Singh left soon afterwards. He was accompanied by his two elder sons and about four hundred men. He had not yet reached the bank of river Sarsa 15 kms to the east when he was attacked by a strong contingent under Wazir Khan.[4] When the Guru was heavily engaged, another detachment of the Mughals delivered an assault on the first batch halting on the river bank. In the midst of rain, cold, darkness and fierce fighting, complete confusion prevailed among the Sikhs. Udai Singh and most of his warriors lost their lives.

[1]Macauliffe, V, 185.

[2]Santokh Singh, 584-147.

[3]A gurdwara called Bachhora Sahib commemorates the place of fighting and dispersion of the Guru's family. It is situated 12 kilometres from Rupar. Sainapat, 65.

[4]Latif, *Panjab*, 265-66.

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Some daring Sikhs pushed their horses into the swirling waters forming foam against stones and pebbles and carried the Guru's family safely across 400 metres, the width of the river. But in this attempt all the property and manuscripts were washed away. The Guru's household was further divided into two groups. Guru's mother and his two younger sons who could not walk or ride for long were taken by Gangu, an old domestic servant of the family to his native village Saheri. Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi were hurriedly led towards Ambala in the disguise of rustic women.[1]

The Guru also suffered heavily. Having put up a tough fight he also threw his horse into the swollen current. Most of his men had been killed in the battle and many perished in the passage of the river. When he reached the other bank, he was left with his two elder sons, Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh, the five beloved ones, and thirty-five other Sikhs, 43 souls in all out of about 400. At Rupar 23 kms farther news was brought to him that about a thousand Mughal troops were advancing against him from Sarhind, while another force was crossing the river Sarsa.

The battle of Chamkaur, December 22, 1704

Guru Gobind Singh realized his delicate position. The enemy was in front and on the rear. To his left were the hill states which were equally opposed to him. The Guru rushed towards Chamkaur 16 kilometres distant. When he was in its neighbourhood he learnt that the enemy was close upon him. He halted in a garden and sent two Sikhs inside the village to find a suitable place of shelter. They chose a mud-built double-storeyed house with a large open compound. One of its two owners offered his portion. The Guru and his Sikhs hurried into it. It took place in the evening on December 21, 1704. The enemy invested the place on the morning of December 22, 1704. Inayatullah Khan in his *Ahakam-e-Alamgiri*,[3] says that the *haveli* was besieged by seven hundred cavalry equipped with artillery. But the number appears to be much larger. The house would have been blown up in no time. The enemy, however, aimed at capturing the Guru alive as it had been done in the case of Shivaji's son Shambhuji fifteen years earlier or eleven years later in the case of Banda Bahadur, both of whom were cut to pieces one limb a day. Out of his forty[2] men

[1]Sainapat, 65-74.
[2]*Zafar Nama*, lines 19 to 41.
[3]P. 11.

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about one-fourth were appointed to defend the gate. An equal number was kept in the upper storey to keep a sharp watch on the enemy movements. The rest took up their position along the walls to see that the enemy did not scale over them.

Syad Muhammad Latif describes this attempt and clearly brings out the chivalrous trait in the character of 18-year-old Ajit Singh, the eldest son of Guru Gobind Singh in the following words:

"Khwaja Mahomed and Nahar Khan, the commanders of the imperial troops, sent a messenger to the Guru, reminding him that he had not the paltry and undisciplined troops of the petty hill chiefs to contend with, but was pitted against the invincible armies of the great Moghal, the King of the Kings, the asylum of the poor, the protector of the world, Alamgir Aurangzeb; that it was madness for him to attempt impossibilities; that it would be well for him to cease hostilities, make his immediate submission, renounce his infidelity and embrace the Islamic faith. The youthful Ajit Singh, drawing his scimitar, exclaimed to the bearer of this message: 'Utter another word and I will smite your head from your body and cut you to pieces, for daring so to address our chief.' The blood of the envoy boiled with rage and he returned to the imperial camp with this defiance."[1]

Afterwards, bitter fighting ensued. The eager and impetuous men of the Guru, clad in the splendid new uniform recently prescribed by the Guru offered tough resistance. They were raked by the gunners. They received the direct fire of the batteries in front. The Sikhs shot down from all sides, from behind the walls, from the roofs, through every window, through every air hole and through every chink in the doors. The storm of balls was answered by a tempest of flame. But the fighting cost most of them their lives.[2]

The battle was fought on December 22, 1704. Guru Gobind Singh has referred to it in his first letter addressed later on to Aurangzeb thus:

"What could forty hungry men do when attacked by a numerous horde unawares? The oath-breakers suddenly attacked us with swords, arrows and muskets. I was forced to engage in the combat and I fought with arrows and muskets. When an affair passes beyond all remedy, it is lawful to resort to the sword . . . Clad in black like a fly, they made a sudden charge. Every soldier who advanced from behind

[1]Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, I, 8.
[2]Hakim Ram Kishan, *Janam Sakhi Guru Gobind Singh*, 149.

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the wall, was struck by an arrow and fell deluged in blood. Those who did not leave the wall, received no injuries and suffered no loss. When I saw that Nahar had come out to fight, I instantly struck him with an arrow. Instead of fighting he fled away. Many other Khans eschewed their idle boast. Then another Afghan appeared in the field like a strong current and in the manner of an arrow or a bullet. A number of them made a valorous assault, some with care and others in madness. Many of attackers were wounded, and two of them lay dead. The despicable Khwaja had not the courage to leave the shelter of the wall and come into the open. Alas, had I seen his face, I would have unhesitatingly bestowed an arrow on him. On both sides many lost their lives and sustained wounds by arrows and muskets. Arrows and bullets were discharged like fireworks, and the earth turned red like tulip. Heads and legs lay in heaps as if the playground was littered with balls and sticks. The arrows whizzed, and the bows twanged, and great tumult rose in the world. The great noise was so frightful that even the mightiest warrior lost his wits. But how could forty even of the bravest succeed when opposed by a countless body?"[1]

In a few hours on a single day, the 39th birthday of the Guru, the two tender princes, Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh, still in their teens, three[2] of the five beloved ones and thirty-two other Khalsa, closely watched by the Guru, laid down their lives at the altar of faith and freedom.[3]

On the shortest wintry day the sun went down soon, and darkness spread on the horizon after 8 o'clock. The Guru was left with five disciples only—Daya Singh, Dharam Singh, Man Singh, Sangat Singh and Sant Singh. The Guru was contemplating on destiny's debacles and fickleness of the fate. In the midst of his mortifying musing, over the past 38 years of his life, he was interrupted by his five surviving Sikhs. They suddenly gathered in a group, whispered something among themselves, and enacted the scene of Anandpur in which Gobind Singh, five years earlier, had played the double role of being the Guru and disciple at the same time. They told Gobind Singh that at the moment they were the Guru and he was a Khalsa. They ordered him to escape in the interest of the Panth. Daya Singh, the first of the five beloved ones, Dharam Singh the second beloved one and another Sikh Man Singh would accompany him. The remaining two

[1] *Zafar Nama*, Lines 19-41.
[2] Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Sikh Martyrs*, 67.

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Sant Singh and Sangat Singh would stay behind to continue the fight. Sant Singh who had a great resemblance with the Guru wore his clothes and sat in the place of the Guru.[1]

The Guru escapes towards Malwa desert

The house was closely surrounded on all sides. Fires were lit up here and there for cooking and heating. The Sikhs in the upper storey could easily watch the movements of the enemy. According to the practice in those days, fighting had ended at nightfall. Most of the soldiers had gone to sleep. Some were keeping a watch at various places. A Sikh went down into the compound and removed dresses from three dead Mughal soldiers. The Guru and his three Sikhs dressed themselves as Mughal soldiers and managed to escape at about 2 o'clock in the morning one by one. It was the seventh day of the moon-lit-half month (*Magh Shudi 7 Samvat 1761*). The moon had set a little before midnight, and afterwards there was complete darkness. It was decided they would meet on the outskirts of Machhiwara, 27 kilometres away. The Guru was the first to leave. He stopped for a while at Jhar Sahib 12 kms away. Here two Gujars, Ramzu and Kalu, recognised the Guru. They raised an alarm. The Guru offered them a few gold coins in order to keep them quiet. They did not stop. The Guru silenced them for ever with his sword. He arrived at Machhiwara first of all. On the outskirt of village Machhiwara, there was a garden. The Guru had reached there an hour before sunrise. He entered the garden, and being completely exhausted lay in a corner among bushes resting his head over a clod. At sunrise his three Sikhs found him lying fast asleep. A Sikh named Gulaba lived in that village. All the four took shelter in his house.

In the same village there lived Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan, two Pathans, who had been under obligation to the Guru. The Guru sought their help. They "resolved to take him to the governor Wazir Khan. The Guru entreated and promised them a magnificent reward if they saved his life. They had in former times sold him horses and received kindness at the hands of the Guru."[2] They arranged for his escape. The Guru put on blue clothes, spread his hair loose on shoulders, and assumed the appearance of a Sufi saint. He was called

[1]Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Sikh Martyrs*, 67.
[2]Latif, *Panjab*, 266.

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the Pir of Uch, a holy place of Muslims near Panjnad, confluence of rivers Satluj, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jehlam. The Guru seated himself on a cot in accordance with the custom of the Pirs on a journey. It was carried by four men, two Sikhs and the two Pathans. One waved the *chanwar* over the Guru's head and served as a reserve to give relief to others.

In village Lal[1] a band of imperial troops intercepted them. The Guru addressed them in Persian. They insisted on verification. Qazi Pir Muhammad of Saloh village who had recognised the Guru certified that he was a Muslim saint. They reached Alamgir village 50 kilometres away near Gill railway station on Dhuri line in safety. Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan left the Guru with Rae Kalha, a big Muslim zamindar, at Hehar village.[2] He received the Guru warmly and kept him at Jatpura, near his headquarters to conceal his identity. At the Guru's request Kalha sent a messenger to Sarhind about 70 kilometres distant to bring news about his family members.

The Guru's first address to Aurangzeb, called Fatah Nama

The scout was expected to take at least a week in his mission. The Guru could not sit idle, and he had to remain in hiding all the time. He was indeed a great literary man. He spent his time in expressing his feelings about Aurangzeb in a Persian poem. It is not available in full. At present it contains only twenty-three and a half couplets. Therein he speaks of the death of his two sons only. The following are the salient points of this letter:

1. The same God who has given you the kingdom, has conferred upon me the riches of protecting religion. (Verse 3)

2. You do not deserve the name of Aurangzeb, because an adorner of the throne does not practise fraud. (Verse 5)

3. I shall strike fire under the hoofs of your horses, and I will not let you drink the water of Panjab. (Verse 13)

4. What does it matter if a jackal through deceit and deception killed two cubs of a lion. (Verse 14)

(The reference is to the two elder princes. Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh, martyred at Chamkaur.)

5. I have lost faith in your vows. I have no other work to do than to apply sword. (Verse 17)

[1] *Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 670
[2] ibid, 671.

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6. If ever I have an occasion to meet you, I shall show you the right and true path. (Verse 19)

7. Let the two armies stand in the field at a distance from each other. (Verse 20)

8. Let the distance be 12 kilometres between them. (Half Verse 21)

9. After this I shall come into the field of battle all alone and you will come with two horsemen. (Verse 22)

10. Come into the field yourself with a sword and a hatchet. Do not ruin the people of the Creator. (Verse 24)[1]

The Guru's two younger sons executed, 27 December, 1704.

The emissary returned in a few days. He said Gangu, Mata Gujri, two princes, Zorawar Singh and Fatah Singh, crossed river Sarsa when the flood was unabated. They came to Rupar and followed the road to Morindah where Gangu's village Saheri was situated. The news of Guru's battle had spread like wild fire in the neighbourhood. Gangu thought of his own safety first. He informed the government officials at Morindah about the persons in his charge. They were sent to Sarhind, headquarters of Wazir Khan.

Gangu was let off with a *Shabash*. The other three were imprisoned in a tower of the fort called Thanda Burj or the Cold Tower. It was a summer resort for officers, but was most uncomfortable in the depth of winter for 80-year-old lady and two children aged eight and five.

Wazir Khan was the bitterest foe of the Guru in particular and of the Sikhs in general. He was biting his lips in rage for his failure to capture the Guru. He now resolved to exercise his power and authority on little children.

On December 24, 1704 the children were produced before him in a public durbar in the presence of hundreds of fully armed and ferocious looking soldiers to overawe the boys. They were told that the Guru, their elder brothers and all the Sikhs had been killed. They were offered security of life and comfortable living by embracing Islam. The children spurned at the suggestion with utmost contempt and anger. Had our grandfather, Guru Tegh Bahadur, accepted Islam, they asked. The Nawab's toady courtier. Suchanand Khatri remarked that the young ones of a snake were equally poisonous.

On 25 December the children were again summoned in the court, but all pressure tactics failed in securing boys' submission.

[1]Ganda Singh. *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, 61-63.

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Nawab Sher Muhammad Khan of Malerkotla had fought against the Guru in the battles of Sarsa and Chamkaur. One of his brothers and a nephew had been killed while fighting. Though the Nawab was bitterly opposed to the Guru, yet the young age of the children, their fearlessness, and their moral courage of the highest degree, touched the tender cords of his heart. Wazir Khan asked Sher Muhammad to take charge of the boys and destroy them. He declined to do so.

To terrorise them further, they were bricked up shoulder high in the fort wall. The children stood firm in their resolution against apostasy. In anger they pushed down the temporary structure built in mud and bricks. Thereupon they were beheaded on December 27, 1704, and their bodies were thrown away. A local Banya named Todar Mal a rich banker,[1] picked up the bodies and took them to the Guru's mother who collapsed at first sight and died. Todar Mal cremated the three bodies. The place where their bodies were thrown is now marked by the gurdwara called Fatahgarh Sahib. On the site where the three bodies were cremated stands the Gurdwara Joti Sarup 1½ kms south-east of Fatahgarh Sahib. Two fairs are held at Gurdwara Fatahgarh Sahib, one on the 12th of Poh, the day of children's martyrdom in December, and the other in March on the day of Hola. East of Sarhind is the durbar of Mata Gujari, mother of Guru Gobind Singh.

As regards his wives, Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi, the messenger said that they had passed Sarhind in disguise of local Jat women undetected on their way to Ambala. Later on the Guru learnt that they could not go to Nahan via Naraingarh as the numerous hilly streams crossing the 70-kilometre-long-road were impassable and the road via Barara and Sadhaura was blocked by the chief of the latter place who had persecuted Budhu Shah for helping the Guru. They trudged on and reached Delhi. They lived in Matya Mahal, a thickly populated Muslim locality apparently in the guise of Muslim women and later on shifted to the area on the backside of the present Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital outside Delhi Gate. A gurdwara stands at this place, and a college called Mata Sundari College has recently been opened there.

A young and pretty girl named Anup Kaur, believed to be Mata Jito's younger sister was captured by Sher Muhammad Khan, Nawab of Malerkotla, who desired to admit her in his harem. She was taken

[1]Sainapat, 75-76 ; Hakim Ram Kishan, 145.

[2]Hakim Ram Kishan, 145.

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to Malerkotla where she committed suicide.

Having learnt about the fate of his family, the Guru did not consider it safe to stay there any longer. He marched on into the waterless sandy tract of Bhatinda and took up his abode at Dina, a village situated about 80 kilometres farther south far away from highways.

The Zafar Nama

At Dina the Guru addressed another letter to Aurangzeb in Persian poetry. This letter is composed in a sterner strain. It has one hundred and eleven couplets. The total number of verses in both the letters comes to one hundred thirty-four and a half. Syad Muhammad Latif asserts that the *Zafar Nama* contained fourteen hundred stanzas.[1]

The *Zafar Nama* falls into three clearly marked parts. The first part consisting of twelve couplets is an invocation to God to resolve his difficulties. The second part contains 66 verses, 13 to 88. In the beginning he condemns the Emperor for his failure as a ruler, for his communalism, for his breach of faith and treachery against taking an oath on the *Quran*. In the third part the Guru praises Aurangzeb for certain qualities in his character.

Aurangzeb had invited the Guru to his court at Aurangabad. The Guru said he would not wait upon such a faithless and false king. He told the Emperor that he had set up a revolutionary movement in Panjab. He justified this step by saying: "When the affair has passed beyond all remedies, it is lawful to have resort to the sword." (Verse 22). Regarding the battle of Chamkaur the Guru says: "After all how could my men carry on the fight, when only forty of them were attacked by a countless horde?" (Verse 41)

The Guru chides the Emperor for having acted against God and the Prophet: "You are faithless and irreligious. You believe neither in God nor in Muhammad." (Verse 46)

Aurangzeb had invited the Guru to his court by swearing on *The Quran* that no harm would be done to him. The Guru declared him a liar and treacherous: "Were you to take a hundred oaths on *The Quran*, I would not trust you in the least." (Verse 49)

Aurangzeb had written to Guru: "Come to see me, otherwise I shall be displeased and come to you." The Guru declined to go to him and invited him to come to Panjab assuring him of complete safety: "If you had kept the oath on *The Quran*. I would have come to you im-

[1]Latif, *Panjab*, 267.

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mediately." (Verse 57) "Come to the village Kangar, and after that we will meet" (Verse 51). "There will not be even the slightest danger on the way, for the whole tribe of Brars is under me". (Verse 59) "Come so that we may talk to each other, and I will treat you well". (Verse 60)

Gobind Singh warns Aurangzeb against shedding innocent blood: "Do not strike a sword unscrupulously on a person, for heaven's sword will also smite you." (Verse 69)

The Guru tells the Emperor that the death of all his four sons did not matter much for him: "What does it matter that four children are killed, as the coiled cobra is still alive?" (Verse 78)

The Guru repeats his determination not to visit his court in the Deccan: "I will not come to you nor travel on this road. I will not go to that place where you want me." (Verse 88)

Gobind Singh realized that this condemnation would arouse the Emperor's wrath. In order to soften it he praised Aurangzeb for many good qualities: "Fortunate you are Aurangzeb, king of kings, skilful swordsman and rider. You are handsome and intelligent. You own a kingdom and riches. You are an expert in wielding the sword. You are as generous as you are a swordsman. You are intellectual and elegant, the bestower of land and wealth. Your generosity is great and in battle you are firm like a mountain. You possess the virtues of angels and splendour of the Pleiades or the Seven Stars". (Verses 89-93)

The Guru explains why the hill rajas were opposed to him: "The idol-worshipping hill men want to kill me, because they are idol-worshipper and I am an idol-breaker." (Verse 95)

In the end the Guru tells Aurangzeb that God is his helper and the Emperor will not be able to harm him: "If you are proud of your army and riches, I gratefully rely on God". (Verse 105). "When God is a friend, what can an enemy do, though he may multiply enmity a hundred times? If an enemy practise hostility a thousand times, he cannot injure even a hair of his head". (Verses 110-111)

This letter was taken to Aurangzeb by Daya Singh and Dharam Singh two of his three companions from Chamkaur. They disguised themselves as Muslim travellers and delivered it to the Emperor at Ahmadnagar in the Deccan, where he had been residing since January 20, 1706. Aurangzeb told the bearers of the letter to persuade their Guru to visit him. He provided them with an order for his officers to help them in their return journey and the Guru on his way from Panjab to the Deccan.

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The *Futah Nama* and *Zafar Nama* are two independent letters.

(1) The *Fatah Nama* begins:

Banām-e-khudāwand-e-tegh-o-tabar,

Khudāwand-e-tīr-o-sonām-o-sipar

Zafar Nama starts:

Kamāl-e-karāmāt, qāim karīm,

Raza bakhsh-o-razāq eihāq-o-rahīm

(2) In *Fatah Nama* the Guru mentions the martyrdom of his two elder sons, Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh. The *Zafar Nama* refers to the execution of his two younger sons also, Zorawar Singh and Fatah Singh.

(3) The mode of meeting Aurangzeb in both the letters is different. In *Fatah Nama* the Guru wishes to meet the emperor in the battle-field. The *Zafar Nama* seeks negotiations with the emperor in Malwa.

(4) *Fatah Nama* is a letter from a military leader and *Zafar Nama* from a religious precept.

The Zafar Nama tells us in unmistable terms that one should not lose courage even when faced against heavy odds, that peace is desirable but not without honour, that in negotiations compromise is essential but not on the terms of the dictator, give and take being the basic feature of a compromise.

In Lakhi Jungle

The Guru stayed at Dina for a few days. The people of Panjab had been so much terrified at the Guru's losses and the victory of the Mughals that Gobind Singh lived here almost alone. Only one Sikh named Dalla had joined him. Here the Guru was informed that Wazir Khan of Sarhind was organizing an army and had dispatched scouts in search of the Guru. At this news Dalla also left him. Man Singh had been sent to neighbouring villages to invite the Sikhs. A roaming Muslim faqir ironically remarked:

Na Dallā, na Mallā

Te Guru ikallā

[There is neither Dalla nor Man Singh. The Guru is all alone.]

The Guru laughed at the faqir and replied:

Guru nāl Allāh

Guru kade na ikallā.[1]

[God is ever with the Guru. The Guru is never alone.]

[1]Narain Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 10-11.

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Such was the indomitable spirit of the Guru and so unshakable was his faith in God

The Guru then decided to move into the Lakhi Jungle. In Guru Gobind Singh's time and even much later there was a dense forest in Firozpur area. It extended from the bank of the River Satluj near Firozpur to the wastes of Bhatinda, stretching over an area of about 80 kilometres long and 25 kilometres broad. This was supposed to contain one lakh of trees and was consequently called Lakhi Jungle. It was an isolated forest surrounded on two sides to the east and south by a sandy desert. Forster says that the Lakhi Jungle was a secure retreat owing to "a scarcity of water", "the valour of its inhabitants" and "for a breed of excellent horses, called the Jungle Tazee".[1] Lakhi Jungle can favourably be compared with the present day Chhangamanga forest situated to the south-west of Lahore in Pakistan.

The Guru left Dina and took to travelling from village to village. He spent a few days in Kangar village. Then he stayed in an upper storey room called 'chaubarah' in a carpenter's house at Dhaliwal village. Passing through the villages of Jatal, Bhagta, Banhiwal, Sarvan, etc., the Guru reached Kot Kapura situated on the borders of Lakhi Jungle. On the way he had collected a considerable following of Barar Jats on payment to fight against the Nawab of Sarhind.

There lived the founder of the village, Kapura, son of Chaudhari Lala of Siryawala village in Faridkot district. He had built a fort at the place. In consequence it came to be called Kot Kapura. Kapura lived in the style of princes and possessed great wealth and power.[2] Guruji asked him to lend his fort temporarily for shelter and also his troops to fight against Wazir Khan. Kapura replied: "I am a slave of the Musalmans. When they learn about my treachery, they will kill me and my family and will plunder my property." The Guru replied, "As you expect so shall it happen."[3]

Guru Gobind Singh was still at Kot Kapura. At this place he received fresh news about the mobilization of Sarhind troops. The Guru inquired which place was most suitable for fighting against the Mughal army. He was told that he should retire across the Lakhi Jungle to Khidrana on the borders of a sandy desert. There was a pond of water

[1] *A Journey from Bengal to England*, 302.

[2] Atar Singh Bhadauriya, *Twarikh Sidhu Barara aur Khandan Phul*, 31-32; Sri Bir Margesh Gur Bilas Devtaru, 139-40.

[3] Bhai Gian Singh Giani, *Sri Guru Panth Prakash*, 291-92.

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which would supply water to his men. Except that there was no water available anywhere else for miles around.

The Guru dispersed his camp. At this the Barars who had been following the Guru demanded payment of their wages. They held up the reins of the Guru's horse. The Guru promised to pay at Khidrana, 33 kilometres farther away. The Guru started. He had not gone far when the Barars again blocked the passage on him. The Guru asked for the reason. They replied that farther onwards the land belonged to another tribe which was opposed to them. Therefore they must receive their dues there and then. The Guru asked: "Do you want Sikhi or salary?" They replied:

"*Kahen nahīn Gur Sikhi dharen,*
Darab, chākri lai bhau karen,
Lie bina ham jān nā den hen."[1]

[We would not take Sikhi. We are in your service for money. Without getting it we will not let you proceed.]

Guruji cleared all the arrears on the spot. Last of all to receive payment was Dan Singh. He declined to accept any money and requested for "Sikhi". Guruji observed: "The Sikhi of Majha went to Mahan Singh (who had refused to sign the *Bedawa* at Anandpur of the forty disclaimers). Now the Sikhi of Malwa goes to you."[2]

The Guru reached Dhilwan village 8 kilometres to the south-east. There Sodhi Kaul, a descendant of Prithi Mal, Guru Arjan's eldest brother, waited on the Guru.[3] He was deeply touched at seeing the Guru in the blue clothes of a Muslim *haji*. He requested the Guru to discard the Muslim style of dress and offered him a suit of white clothes.[4] Guru took off his blue clothes, tore them to pieces and set the tatters one by one on fire. While doing so he uttered the following verse:

"*Nil bastar lai kapre phāre,*
Turk Pathani amal gaya."

[As I am tearing out the blue clothes, So I am destroying the Mughal rule.]

Thereupon Sodhi Kaul remarked that the Guru had modified Guru Nanak's hymn in *Asa di Var* :

[1]Bhai Santokh Singh, *Sri Guru Prakash Suraj Granth*, Pratham An Ansu. 17; Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, 290.
[2]ibid.
[3]Daulat Rae, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 218.
[4]*Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 685-86.

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"Nil bastar lai Kapṛa paihre
Turk Pathani amal kiya."
[Having put on blue clothes, I began to live like Turks and Pathans.]

Kaul further observed that Guru Har Rae had excommunicated his son Ram Rae for changing Guru Nanak's one word 'Musalman' into 'beiman', while the Guru had changed two words. The Guru replied that he had done so for '*hit upkār*' (the good of others) and had sacrificed '*sarvansh*' (all of his four sons), while Ram Rae did so to please the emperor and save his skin. Nanak by wearing blue dress lived like Turks and Pathans. While he was smashing the tyrannous Mughal rule by tearing the blue clothes. The Sodhi was pleased and got his grandson baptized by the Guru, who named him Abhai Singh.[1]

One piece of a blue cloth torn by the Guru fell away from the fire. Bhai Man Singh picked it up, and out of reverence as the Guru had worn the cloth, he tied it on his head. The Guru was pleased and called him a Nihang Singh. Later on the Nihang Sikhs adopted this practice.[2] This was perhaps the beginning of Nihangs or crocodiles.

Here a large number of Mujhails (people of Majha), the country lying between Beas and Ravi came to condole with the Guru on the death of all his sons and his mother. The Guru received them in exceptional fortitude and calm sublimity. He advised them not to be sorry and grief-stricken, saying it was the will of God. To illustrate his view he drew with his finger two parallel lines on the ground and then rubbed them off with his hand. He then observed:

"Brother Sikhs! there was no joy when these lines came into existence, and there could be no grief when the lines were rubbed off. So are the affairs of this world transitory. God makes a thing, and unmakes a thing. Who are we to grumble since the rein is in His hand? Rely, then, firmly on His will, for He is the Almighty. What are we poor mortals before Him?"[3]

The Guru was delighted on meeting them. Out of glee he composed the following verses:

"Lakhi Jungle Khalsa āe,
Didār kito ne;
Sun ke sad māhi da,
Mehi pāni gẖāh mato ne;
Kise nāl na raliā koi,

[1]Gian Singh, *Sri Guru Panth Prakash*, 291-292.
[2]*Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 686.
[3]Latif, *Panjab*, 266.

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Ih ki shauk pāyo ne;
Gia firaq milia mit māhi,
Tan hi shukar kito ne."[1]

[The Khalsa came into the Lakhi Jungle, to see me. On hearing the call of the beloved, they did not water and feed their buffaloes; Nobody waited for another's company. Such was their eagerness. The sadness of separation was gone on meeting the beloved and friend. Only then they were happy.]

The Guru reached Khidrana on the 1st of Magh

The gathering of the Khalsa in large numbers with the Guru had greatly alarmed Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind. He was afraid that the Guru might create trouble again. Rumours were pouring in of Wazir Khan's preparations for a fresh attack. The Guru resolved to cross the Lakhi Jungle and seek refuge in the sandy region beyond. He hurriedly moved onward and retired into the waterless wastes at Khidrana.

The Guru lived there in a hut about a kilometre south-east of the village where now stands the Gurdwara Dātan Sahib. One morning while he was brushing his teeth sitting on the ground, one Muslim in disguise of a Hindu Jat approached him from behind. The Guru turned back. The assailant who was a spy of Wazir Khan rushed upon the Guru with a naked dagger. The Guru was always in arms. He immediately struck him with his sword and cut off his head. His grave lies close to the Gurdwara.

There he celebrated the Baisakhi festival on March 29, 1705, recollecting the events of the past six years. The memories of Anandpur, the Abode of Peace, loved by the Guru, deeply touched his heart. But he quickly submitted to the will of God.

The battle of Khidrana, 8 May, 1705

The forty deserters from Anandpur lived in the Majha region in the district of Amritsar. As they had renounced the guruship of Gobind Singh in writing, they did not come to him out of shame. In one of their villages called Chubhāl or Jhabal there lived a young woman named Bhago. She was very zealous to serve the Guru. She was also smitten at the ignominy shown by her people to him. She was determined to wipe out the badge of infamy. She wore man's dress, rode

[1]Koer Singh, *Gur Bilas Patshahi Das*, 230.

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on horseback and collected forty deserters. Many more joined her. In a body they marched towards Khidrana to meet the Guru and seek his pardon. They encamped for the night near the village. Next day early in the morning they saw a cloud of dust in the distance from Bhatinda side. By intuition it struck Bhago that the Mughal troops were coming to attack the Guru. Bhago called her men to attention. Their loose sheets or *chādars* were spread on bushes to give an impression to the enemy that a large force lay encamped there. They sat scattered among bushes ready to fire. When the troops drew near they suddenly raised a huge commotion and commenced fighting.

The din and dust alerted the Guru and his men. He joined his Sikhs at a place now called Tibi Sahib. There was a small eminence or sand hill which was later on removed to level the ground for building a Gurdwara. On the top of this hill the Guru took up his position and shot arrows on the enemy fast approaching towards him. They had arrived half-way between Bhago's camp and Tibi Sahib. Then he mounted a steed and advanced to the actual scene of battle.[1] Under the vehement assault personally delivered by the Guru the enemy faltered. They were fatigued by the long night march and lack of drinking water both for men and beasts in the hot weather. On the other side Guru's Sikhs were fresh and firm. The enemy after sustaining heavy losses retired. This was the last battle of the Guru.

On going farther in the battlefield the Guru was greeted by Mai Bhago. She told him how the forty deserters had fought valiantly and then laid down their lives. The Guru was deeply touched by their sense of remorse and self-sacrifice. A little ahead the Guru saw one of the group of deserters, Mahan Singh, lying seriously wounded and about to expire. He was the man who had declined to join the group of forty, but belonged to it. The Guru patted him. He requested the Guru to pardon all the forty renouncers of faith in him, as all of them had laid down their lives for him now. "*Tuti gandho*", said he, meaning "restore the snapped relationship." He supplicated that the note of renunciation called *Bedawa* document (disclaimer) be destroyed. The Guru immediately got it from his camp, tore it to pieces in the man's presence, granted his pardon to all, and declared them *Muktas* or those who had obtained salvation. Thereupon the Sikh breathed his last in peace.[2] Such was his devotion to his friends and

[1]The two Gurdwaras, Tibi Sahib and Rakab Sahib commemorate this site.
[2]*Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 692-95.

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companions as well as to the Guru. He hailed from Majha. The forty *Muktas* are remembered daily in the Sikh prayer.

In memory of the martyrs the Guru renovated and enlarged the tank near the field of battle. It had little water then. The Guru called it Muktsar or the tank of salvation because it had supplied water to the forty. The Guru declared that whosoever bathed in it would get salvation. Later on a Gurdwara was built at the site of cremation of forty *Muktas*. The area occupied by these shrines is called *Tuti Gandi* meaning that the breach was healed. A great fair is held there on the first of Magh in January every year, in memory of the Guru's arrival at Khidrana. The village also came to be known as Muktsar. It lies 50 kilometres south-east of Firozpur in Faridkot district.[1] Mai Bhago followed the Guru to Nander. She was considered a saint by the Sikhs. She was the Joan of Arc in Sikh history. After the Guru's demise she settled at Bidar 190 kms from Nander. First she lived at Gurdwara Nanak Jhira 1½ kms from Bidar town and after sometime she shifted to Jinwara 10 kms from Bidar.[2]

The army of Guru Gobind Singh

Guru Gobind Singh fought about a score of engagements with the hill rajas and the Mughals. Some of them were small, while others were of great importance. His major battles took place at Bhangani (1688), Nadaun (1690), Nirmohgarh (1700), Anandpur (1704), Chamkaur (1704), and Khidrana (1705).

Guru Gobind Singh's army mainly consisted of Sikhs drawn from lower classes. On two occasions he recruited mercenary troops. A few days before the battle of Bhangani about 500 Pathans well paid by the Guru deserted him just when their service was badly needed. They went over to the enemy, and the Guru had to fight hard against them. Similarly, the Brar Jats of Malwa were recruited for his last battle at Khidrana (Muktsar). They insisted on getting their dues paid before the battle. On receiving payment they immediately retired to their homes. It were the forty of Majha led by Māī Bhago who sustained the onslaught of the enemy, and were all killed except the lady.

The Guru's Sikhs were not paid any salary. But they were properly looked after. They were well-fed and well-equipped. This expenditure

[1]Macauliffe, V, 212-15, 220; Latif, *Panjab*, 266.
[2]H. L. S. Tandon, *The Sikh Review*, October 1971, 26-27.

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was managed from the voluntary offerings of sangats made into Guru ki Golak. The Guru freely mixed with them and talked to them individually. They were hypnotized by his magnetic personality. The Guru considered himself one of them, and they loved and respected him.

The troops were given training in manly sports, sword play, arrow shooting, firing, participating in mock fights, wrestling bouts, armed duels, horse racing and hunting of tigers and bears. In the course of his sermons generally held twice a day in the morning and evening, he told them stories of heroism and patriotism. He developed their character so that they could whole-heartedly devote themselves in the service of their mother country and dharam.

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CHAPTER 16

Killed By Court Conspiracy, 1707-1708

At Damdama Sahib, January-October, 1706

The Guru stayed at Khidrana upto October, 1705. He wanted to be nearer Sarhind to know in time about any further expedition against him, and yet be in the sandy region to provide an easy escape. He went to Bhatinda,[1] 45 kilometres east. From there he went still 45 kilometres farther east and arrived at Talwandi Sabo, in the beginning of January, 1706, where many Sikhs joined him. Here the Guru built a house for himself having a spacious compound with a strong wall around it. He called it Damdama or a fortified mound. The village also came to be known Damdama Sahib.[2]

At Damdama Sahib Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi with Bhai Mani Singh came from Delhi.[3] In anguish and sorrow they asked the Guru where their four sons were. The Guru, an embodiment of fortitude, pointing towards his Khalsa present there replied:

"In putran ke shish par vār die sut chār:
Chār mue to kiā huā jiwat kai hazār."

[The four sons have been offered as a sacrifice over the heads of these sons. What does it matter if we have lost four sons, while thousands of them are alive.]

He consoled them by giving examples and parables, with few phrases and many images which were convincing and persuasive. He said the princes were only physically dead. It was useless to weep and cry over a material thing which did not endure. They had died for God and so would live for ever. The entire Khalsa were their brothers. While saying so tears trickled down the Guru's eyes. The Sikhs asked

[1]A gurdwara in the fort commemorates Guru's stay there.

[2]Koer Singh, 152. A great fair is held here every year attended by thousands of people from all over the Panjab.

[3]*Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 757.

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why he did so when according to him the world was like a dream. The Guru plucked a leaf off a creeper. At that place some juice oozed out. The Guru observed that children were like leaves and parents like creepers. Oozing out a tear was natural.[1]

Copies of the Adi Granth

Guru Gobind Singh had got the Adi Granth copied in Bhaura Sahib at Anandpur. This copy had been lost in river Sarsa near Rupar. Bhai Mani Singh was a scholarly person like Bhai Gurdas. Guru Gobind Singh had learnt the Adi Granth by heart. He dictated it to Bhai Mani Singh. He inserted in it a number of hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur and only one verse of his own. They are given in the Adi Granth according to tune and metre. Three more copies of the holy Granth were made at Damdama Sahib. One of them is at Akal Bunga, Amritsar, second at Patna, third at Anandpur, and fourth at Damdama Sahib.[2]

On the way to Aurangzeb, 1707

The Guru spent nearly ten months[3] at Damdama Sahib converting people who visited him in large numbers. His following was daily increasing. Had he stayed here longer, the Damdama would have surpassed Anandpur in its glory and grandeur. This place could have remained quite safe as it was far away from the hill rajas as well as the centres of Mughal authority, and centres of Islamic culture. A big Gurdwara was erected there later. A fair is held here every year on 1st of Baisakh.

One idea seems to have taken possession of the Guru's mind. It was to punish Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind for his treachery. perfidy, bigotry and cruelty. Instead of gathering his own resources and making fresh efforts, he turned to his greatest enemy Aurangzeb to get Wazir Khan punished. It was an impossible task. Heaven could fall upon earth, seas could have dried up, mountains could have become dust of the earth. sun and moon could have disappeared, but Aurangzeb could not have punished Wazir Khan for the sake of the Guru and pardoned Guru Gobind Singh for his defiance. On the con-

[1]Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, 301.

[2]ibid, 304: *Raj Khalsa*, 595.

[3]Gian Singh puts this period at 9 months and 9 days. Another source declares it 9 months, 9 days, 9 pahars and 9 gharis. Cf. *Panjab States Gazetteers*, XVII A. 1904, 75.

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trary he could have thanked God that his bitterest foe after Shivaji had fallen into his clutches, and he could have performed another act of grace by hacking the Guru limb by limb.

Aurangzeb invited the Guru to come to him. Inayatullah[1] says that Guru Gobind Singh had sought an interview with the Emperor. Aurangzeb deputed Shaikh Muhammad Yar Mansabdar and Muhammad Beg Gurzbardar to console "Gobind Rae Nanak Prastan" and bring him to the court. The Prime Minister Munim Khan was instructed to provide him escorts on the borders of every province and pay him travelling expenses if demanded.[2]

The Guru started for the south from Damdama Sahib on 21 October, 1706. He sent his wives back to Delhi under the charge of Bhai Mani Singh. He passed through Hisar, Sarsa, Sadulpur, Churu, Sikar, Ringas and Phulera. At Naraina, a village five kilometres from Phulera, Jait Ram *Mahant* met the Guru. In the course of conversation the Guru asked the *Mahant* if he could secure help from Rajput princes to eliminate the Mughal government. He replied that it was almost impossible. The war between Rathors and Mughals was in full swing in Marwar and hence Ajit Singh could give no help. Jai Singh of Mewar had made peace with Aurangzeb. Mohkam Singh of Nagor was openly on the Emperor's side. Jai Singh, the young Raja of Jaipur, was in the Mughal camp and was fighting under Aurangzeb against the Marathas. He suggested that the Guru should use Madho Das Bairagi, a young, fiery Rajput from Panjab hills, in his service. He was a brave fellow thoroughly patriotic and sincere. He had been living in Maharashtra for long. He was fully aware of the Maratha methods for successfully opposing the Emperor. He was living on the banks of Godavari at Nander. It just struck the Guru that Madho Das might be Lachhman Dev of Paonta. At Baghaur in Rajasthan, Daya Singh and Dharam Singh met the Guru. They had delivered the Guru's letter to Aurangzeb and had brought a message from him that he was anxious to see the Guru. Shortly afterwards, when he was still at Baghaur, the Guru learnt that Aurangzeb had died at Ahmadnagar on February 20, 1707.

From Rajasthan to Delhi

The Guru decided to turn towards Delhi to meet his wives who

[1] *Ahkam-e-Alamgiri*. 7-9.
[2] Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, 74-75.

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were living there. In Delhi the Guru first stayed in a house lying at the back of Humayun's tomb. The site is now marked by the Gurdwara Damdama Sahib. As a token of love for Harijans of Delhi on account of Jaita's valorous deed, the Guru shifted to the colony of shoe-makers, called Mochi Bagh. The mochis served the Guru with great devotion. The Guru was so highly pleased with the residents of the colony that he changed its name to Moti Bagh, the abode of pearls. A gurdwara stands at this place. It lies on the Ring road now called Mahatma Gandhi Road. When the Guru was in Delhi a goldsmith supplicated him for the boon of a son. He waited on the Guru a couple of times. One day the Guru was going to hunt in the neighbouring jungle. The goldsmith followed him along with some Sikhs. They had not gone far when they saw a woman leaving a newly born male child in bushes. The Guru asked the goldsmith to adopt that child.[1]

Relations with Bahadur Shah

Three sons had survived Aurangzeb, Muazzam, the living eldest, 64-year-old, was the viceroy of North-Western Provinces including Afghanistan and Baluchistan. The 54-year-old Azam and 40year-old Kam Bakhsh were with the Emperor in the Deccan. Azam seized the imperial treasury, took command of Aurangzeb's army and declared himself king on March 14, 1707 and rushed towards Delhi. Muazzam hurried from Kabul to Delhi. At Lahore he declared himself emperor under the title of Bahadur Shah. He reached Delhi on 20 May, where he spent three months of summer.

If the Guru had returned to Damdama Sahib, this would have been the most opportune time to carve out for himself a small republic in south-west Panjab with Damdama Sahib as its capital. But he did not desire such an exploit. He simply wanted Wazir Khan to be punished by the Prince.

Every Mughal Prince, however weak and inefficient, had to be a diplomat by the force of circumstances. The Guru on the other hand hated any cunning diplomacy. He was plain, simple and straightforward. Consequently he fell an easy prey to court intrigues. Muazzam invited Gobind Singh to join him, partly to avoid any Sikh rising when he was busy in a civil war, and partly to use the Sikhs in his cause. The Guru's contemporary Sainapat in *Sri Gur Sabha* says that the Guru was approached for help by Muazzam's emissaries. Bhai

[1]Macauliffe, V, 231.

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Jodh Singh in *Shri Kalgidhar Hulas* says that Prince Muazzam deputed Nand Lal to prevail upon the Guru to join him with his Sikhs. After reading the Prince's letter the Guru remarked that the empire was his, but he should not be dishonest like his father. Nand Lal held out full assurance on behalf of the Prince.[1] It means that the Guru blessed the Prince. The Guru remained in Delhi and invited Sikhs to join him. Several hundred Sikhs gathered there.[2] They were sent under the command of Bhai Dharam Singh to support Muazzam against Azam. Bhai Jodh Singh and Gian Singh hold that the Guru also reached the the battlefield to assure Muazzam's victory.[3] The Guru told the Prince:

Sidaq rakh hovegi fatah teri
Iphal kade wi bachan na jāwandāẽ.

[Consider it a truth that you will be victorious; Our word never goes in vain.]

The same author further states that the Guru pushed his horse near Azam's elephant and killed him with his arrow:

Jithe aha Azam hāthi haud upar
Pās us de jhat pachāya eẽ
Khich tir Azam mathe wich māran
Jhat khāk de nāl mitāyā eẽ
Rahya dam wich na dam koī
Digde sār parlok sadhāya eẽ.

Muazzam inquired whose arrow had killed Azam. When the arrow was pulled out of the victim's body, it was the goldtipped arrow of the Guru.[4] The battle took place at Jajau situated between Agra and Dholpur on June 8, 1707. The Guru returned to Delhi.

The Guru joins Bahadur Shah at Agra

Bahadur Shah invited the Guru to meet him at Agra. Sahib Devi pressed to accompany him and the Guru took leave of Sundari who wished to stay at Delhi. This was their last meeting. Guru Gobind Singh had stayed at Delhi for about a month. He then left for Agra and visited Mathura and Brindaban on the way.[5] He established his camp 12 kms from Agra and 6 kms from Bahadur Shah's camp.

[1]Jodh Singh, *Shri Kalgidhar Hulas*, 203-5.
[2]ibid, 205-6.
[3]*Panth Prakash*, 309-10.
[4]ibid, 206-7.
[5]Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, 119.

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Munim Khan Khan-e-Khanan, the prime minister, invited the Guru to his place. He was warmly received and well-entertained. The Guru shifted his camp to a nearby garden. The Guru held assemblies twice a day. Many people came to attend them from far and near.[1] On July 23, 1707,[2] the Guru and his Sikhs, all armed, left for the court. They were stopped at the gate of the Fort and were asked to disarm themselves. The Guru declined to do so. The Emperor permitted them to attend the court with arms on. The Guru was warmly received. He was presented with a rich robe of honour, a jewelled scarf (dhukhdukhi) worth Rs. 60,000 and five lakhs of rupees in cash. Another present of costly clothes, jewellery and ornaments to the value of one lakh of rupees was granted for Mata Sundari, and sent to Delhi.[3]

A newsletter of the court of Bahadur Shah dated July 24, 1707 says: "Gobind Nanaki, according to orders, fully armed, interviewed the Emperor and offered one hundred gold coins. He was granted a robe of honour and a jewelled *padak* and was given congee"[4]

The Guru told the Emperor that on a previous occasion Emperor Jahangir had surrendered Chandu Diwan to his grandfather Guru Hargobind. Similarly, the Guru demanded that the following persons might be delivered up to him:

1. Wazir Khan of Sarhind; 2. Suchanand Diwan of Sarhind; 3. Gangu Brahman of Kheri; 4. Jani and Mani of Morindah: 5. Shams Khan of Bajwara; 6. Mukarram Khan of Jalandhar; 7. Dilawar Khan of Lahore.

The Emperor expressed his limitations for the time being and promised to do so as soon as possible.[5]

Destiny drags the Guru to death trap

The Emperor asked the Guru to stay at Agra to give him the pleasure of his company. He offered him a daily allowance of Rs. 1,000. Sainapat says the Emperor treated the Guru as a holy saint and not

[1]Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, 122.
[2]ibid, 121.
[3]Sainapat, 96-98; Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*, I, 197.
[4]Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*. I, 82.
[5]Bhai Jodh Singh, *Sri Kalgidhar Hulas*. 208.

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as a servant or dependent.[1] The real object was not to allow the Guru any occasion to revive his struggle against the Mughal Government. Gobind Singh thought that when the Emperor was so much inclined towards him he might succeed in getting at least Wazir Khan punished.

Just then news arrived that disturbances had broken out in Rajasthan, and that his youngest brother Kam Bakhsh was in revolt at Hyderabad in the Deccan. The Emperor left Agra for Rajasthan on October 28, 1707 taking the Guru with him. The Guru had two objects in view in accompanying the Emperor. One was to secure the royal order for punishment of Wazir Khan, and the second was to meet his old companion of the hunt at Paonta later known as Banda who was then living at Nander. Khafi Khan, the historian of Aurangzeb's reign, states:

"During the days when Bahadur Shah directed his attention towards Hyderabad, one of the leaders of that infamous (*badnam*) community, Gobind by name, came unto the presence of the Emperor, and proceeded in his company at the head of two or three hundred horsemen and infantry armed with spears."[2]

On Sundays in the royal camp the Guru regularly addressed "assemblies of worldly persons, religious fanatics and all sorts of people."[3]

Guru Gobind Singh issued a letter from the neighbourhood of Agra to the Sikhs of Dhaul.

From the tenth Guru

To the *sangat* of Dhaul. You are my Khalsa. The Guru shall protect you. Repeat Guru, Guru. With all happiness we have come to the Padshah. A dress of honour and a jewelled *Dhukhdhuki* worth sixty thousand was presented to us. With the Guru's grace the other things are also progressing. In a few days we are also coming. My instructions to the entire Khalsa *sangat* are to remain united. When we arrive in Kahlur, the entire Khalsa should come to our presence fully armed. He who will come shall be happy.

Sammat 1764,[4] Katik 1st
(2 October, 1707)

The Guru's residence in the imperial camp was a fatal mistake com-

[1]Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sabha*, 121; Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, 313.
[2]Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, 652.
[3]*Tarikh-e-Bahadur Shahi*, *E&D*, VII, 566.
[4]Translation by Ganda Singh.

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mitted by the Guru. The entire Mughal court was anti-Hindu and anti-Sikh. The Guru was looked upon as a rebel punishable with death. Wazir Khan was a hero for them, fit to be rewarded rather than punished. His representative was always in attendance at the court. He must have reported this matter to his master. The Guru's influence with the Emperor was looked down upon by one and all. Every courtier was alert to see that no harm came to Wazir Khan, while intrigues and machinations to harm the Guru were set afoot in right earnest.

Aurangzeb's policy continued

Bahadur Shah was not making any change in his father's policy. On December 7, 1707, he sent orders to the Imperial Kotwal of Delhi to see that the Hindus should not ride in palanquins and on Arab and Iraqi horses. They should not visit the courts wearing rings in ears and beards shaved. The realization of Jazia and pilgrim tax continued as before.[1]

The contemporary poet of Delhi, Mir Jafar Zatalli, also condemns Bahadur Shah: *Gar shewa-e-gadai wa khawāri talab kuni Bas, naukari Shah-e-Muazzam ghanimat* (If you wish to lead the life of a beggar and disgrace, then take up the service under Shah-e-Muazzam ast.)

The Guru's foster-son is killed at Chitor

After suppressing the disturbances in Rajasthan the Emperor left Ajmer for Ujjain on March 22, 1708. He halted at Chitor on April 2, 1708. The contemporary author Abdur Rasul, in his *Tarikh-e-Muazzam Shah* written in 1708 AD. narrates an incident which he says took place at Chitor in April, 1708. Emperor Bahadur Shah was halting there on his way to the Deccan. Guru Gobind Singh was with him. There was a lad not yet downy, whom the author calls "son of Guru Gobind". He was anxious to see the fort, and accompanied by 50 to 60 comrades went up the hill. The guards at the gate obstructed them saying that nobody could enter the fortress. A scuffle ensued in which the guards were killed. Thereupon another strong contingent of troops (*fauj-e-digar*) emerged from a place of ambush (*kamingah*). A fierce fight took place. The Rajputs surrounded the Sikhs on all sides, and destroyed all of them with bullets, arrows and stones. "The son of

[1]V.S. Bhatnagar, *Life and Times of Sawai Jai Singh*, 63, fn. 108.
[2]Mir Jafar Zatalli, *Kuliyat*, edited by Naim Ahmad, 1979, p. 27.

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Guru Gobind like a furious tiger struck down several men with his piercing sword and fell dead by the side of his companions.[1] As the hostility of the Mughal Court to the Guru was well known, the Rajputs seem to have taken such a drastic step without any fear from the Emperor who really took no notice of it.

On the authority of Abdur Rasul, the Pakistan Radio frequently broadcasts that only one son of Guru Gobind Singh was killed at Sarhind, and the other lost his life at the hands of Hindu Rajputs. This is false propaganda. It is absolutely clear and certain that Guru Gobind Singh had lost all of his four sons in Panjab. The Guru says:

"What does it matter that four children have been killed, as the coiled cobra is still alive."

A newsletter of the imperial court dated May 13, 1710 says:

"Bā Wazir Khan keh pirsān-e-khurd Guru Gobind Singh rā kushtah būd adāwat-e-qalbi dārand."[2] (They cherish genuine enmity towards Wazir Khan who had killed the younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh.)

The newsletter mentions sons (*pisrān*) in plural and not one son in singular. It appears that the Guru had been fascinated by some lad whom he treated with great love and affection as a foster-father and the people looked upon him as the Guru's son. Sainapat calls him Zorawar Singh, while Fauja Singh says he was the son of a carpenter of Basi Pathanan near Sarhind.[3]

Bhai Man Singh slain in the Mughal camp

The Emperor arrived at Mandsor on April 20, 1708. When the imperial camp halted on the banks of river Narbada, a Muslim trooper killed "the brave Man Singh, one of the surviving heroes of Chamkaur, who had never parted from the Guru."[4] The Emperor ordered that his murderer should be seized and handed over to the Guru for punishment. The Guru pardoned him, and thus gained great praise from the Muhammadans for his mercy and clemency."[5] Even these two events did not open the eyes of the Guru to his own safety.

Intrigues against the Guru

The imperial camp was at Burhanpur on the river Tapti in July,

[1] *Tarikh-e-Muazzam Shah*, Persian MSS. of Rampur Library, extracts reproduced by Ganda Singh in his *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, 76-81.

[2] Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, I, 84.

[3] Sainapat, 101; Fauja Singh, *Atlas Travels of Guru Gobind Singh*, 19.

[4] Koer Singh, 49-51.

[5] Macauliffe, V, 235-36.

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1708. A severe pestilence broke out there in the imperial army. A high fever lasting for a week resulted in death. The porters charged twenty rupees to carry a sick man to a distance of 9 kms.[1] Prisoners captured in Rajasthan were sent to the advance camp to dig graves. At the next camp tents were filled with the sick and graves with the dead. The Guru followed the royal camp at a distance of a couple of kilometres, and some of his men also must have perished. They reached Nander on the banks of river Godavari in mid-August, 1708. There the Guru halted as he was anxious to meet Madho Das Bairagi. The Emperor also encamped there as he did not want to leave the Guru alone. The Guru was no diplomat. He was absolutely straightforward and frank. Besides, being a religious leader he shunned the cunning and hypocrisy of a courtier. While in the Emperor's camp for fifteen months, July, 1707 to September, 1708, he had told everybody that he was there to secure punishment of Wazir Khan. The Emperor's troops and nobles did not like the presence of the Guru and his Sikhs in their midst. They knew their objective and hated them.[1]

It was a general practice with the Mughals to keep the representatives of their governors, viceroys, chiefs and princes in their court to convey to their masters the royal orders promptly and to see to their execution punctually. Wazir Khan was therefore getting full information about Guru's doings at the court. He was very much upset on learning that the Emperor had conferred a costly dress of honour on the Guru at Agra. He understood that the excesses committed by him lay beyond the limits of pardon by the Guru. He was terribly afraid of the successful result of the Guru's negotiations. He knew that Jahangir had handed over Chandu Shah to Guru Hargobind. He was determined to avoid that fate. He won over by gifts and cash in the name of Islam all the big courtiers who were in the Emperor's confidence. They continuously impressed upon the Emperor not to yield to Guru's pleadings.

To excite the religious bigotry of the nobles and troops against the Guru, and to secure his assassination, Wazir Khan deputed a Sayyid with two Pathans to remain in Bahadur Shah's entourage.[2] The Guru and his Sikhs remained unaware of these machinations, and if they knew they did not care and bother about it.

[1]Anonymous, *Tarikh-e-Bahadur Shahi*, *E&D*, VII, 566.
[2]Macauliffe, V, 235.
[3]Ibid, 232.

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One day the Emperor was having a private audience with a few persons of eminence. The Sayyid and the Guru were also present. In order to perplex the Guru, and to degrade him in the estimation of the Emperor the Sayyid asked him if he could perform a miracle. The Guru replied that miracles were in the power of the Emperor. He could raise a humble person to the highest office and dignity, or degrade him therefrom. The Sayyid said he knew that, but had the Guru himself the power of working any miracles? Upon this the Guru drew forth a gold coin and said that it was a miracle, for everything could be purchased with it. The Sayyid asked if he could show any further miracles. In reply the Guru drew his sword, and said that that also was a miracle. It could cut off heads and confer thrones and empires upon those who wielded it with dexterity.[1]

The suddenly drawing out of a flashing sword with a jerk in the presence of the Emperor frightened the Sayyid, and he asked no more questions after that. In excitement the Guru requested the Emperor to deliver Wazir Khan to him. The Emperor asked what he proposed to do with him. "The Guru candidly replied that he would have life for life, according to the law of retaliation contained in the Emperor's sacred book. The Emperor shuddered on hearing this request, but gave no direct refusal."[2]

The Guru expressed his deep disappointment at the Emperor's attitude. He told Bahadur Shah that he would not depend upon him any longer and would try his own resources to punish the tyrant. The Guru separated himself from the imperial camp and set up his own independent *derah* at a stone's throw one km outside the city in a colony known as Afzalnagar, and called by the Sikhs Abchalnagar by purchasing a plot of land from Sayyid Sabir Shah Faqir who objected to Guru's camp on his land.[3] This took place towards the close of August, 1708.[4]

Banda deputed to Panjab, September, 1708

On September 3, 1708 the Guru called at Bairagi's cottage situated on the top of a hillock on the bank of river Godavari. The Bairagi was

[1]Macauliffe, V, 232.

[2]ibid, 234.

[3]Khushwaqt Rae, *Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, 1812, folio, 36a; Daulat Rae. *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 231, Hakim Ram Kishan, 196; Bhai Jodh Singh, *Sri Kalgidhar Hulas*, 256-58.

[4]Khushwaqt Rae, 36a.

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not in, but returned soon afterwards. The Guru sat on his cot on which the Bairagi did not allow anybody else to sit and insulted a person sitting there by mistake. He was overawed in the presence of the Guru, whom he recognised at once. The Guru asked: "Who are you?" "Your *bandā* (slave), Sir," was the reply. The Guru said: "It is not the business of a slave to insult saints and travellers. His duty is to serve and entertain them." The Bairagi replied: "Your commands will be implicitly obeyed." The Guru observed:

One is not virtuous who possessing strength retires from the world like you. The honour, life and property of your countrymen are unsafe. Innocent people are being slaughtered. Unwilling persons are forcibly converted to Islam. Women are forcibly seized and violated. Children are mercilessly destroyed. There is no freedom of thought, expression and conscience. In Maharashtra you can see the ruin of the country and the people with your own eyes. In the north the Rajput resistance has been broken. The Jats of Mathura have been crushed. The Satnamis of Narnaul have been completely wiped out of existence. In the valley of Kashmir almost the entire population has been converted to Islam. My own father was executed. All of my children and my mother, and thousands of my Sikhs have been killed. You are a Rajput. You possess a youthful body and mind and a strong soul. Does it behove you to lead the life of a hermit when the nation cries for your help? The blood of a Rajput hero is flowing in your veins. The declaration of a *dharma yudh* or holy war has been made. The battle drum has been struck. At such a time it is not proper for a man like you to lie down in rest. O high priest ! there is no place in the world where death does not reach. No remedy has been found to stop death. There is no shield which can check its attack. Death is certain. It is unavoidable. We must face this truth. When it is a fact, why should we meet a coward's death? In the brave man's death there lies the secret of life. We must learn how to lead the life of a hero, and then die a hero's death.

My dear brave Rajput! Throw away these hermit's clothes. Don the Rajput soldier's uniform. Adorn yourself with arms in place of ashes which you rub on your body. You have a lot of magnetism in you. That is why thousands of people are devoted to you. In the new life you will be served by tens of thousands. My Khalsa is awake. It is waiting for a man like you. You have the ability of a hero and capacity of a giant. The mother country lies bound in fetters. Smash them to pieces and liberate the mother who has nursed you. In this lies

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your own good and that of the nation,

Banda quietly submitted. After this Banda daily waited upon the Guru and carefully studied the working of the Guru's mind. He tried to absorb the Guru's national spirit and prepared himself to take charge of his unfinished work in Panjab. Meanwhile the Guru was badly wounded by a Pathan who had frequently visited him. Banda felt enraged at this treachery and infidelity. Banda expressed his eagerness to leave for Panjab as early as possible.

Banda became a disciple of the Guru, but the Guru did not baptize him according to his new ceremony of administering Pahul. It seems to us that the Guru did so deliberately for certain reasons:

1. Banda was already known as Guru in Maharashtra and he commanded a large following. The Guru did not want to enhance Banda's prestige as a religious leader among the Sikhs.

2. He was over-active and over-energetic and the Guru wanted to keep him in check, by not making him a regular Khalsa.

3. By making him a regular Sikh, the Guru feared lest he might claim guruship in course of time. Without baptism the Khalsa would not accept him as the Guru.

There is other proof in support of this argument:

1. Had he been baptised, he would not have changed the Guru's salutation of *Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa, Wah Guru ji ki Fatah* to Fatah Darshan.

2. In case of his being a regular Sikh, a schism could not have taken place among his followers into Tatva Khalsa and Bandai Sikhs.

3. There are no contemporary or near contemporary sources to establish the fact that Banda had been baptized. All sources quoted in support of this assertion are one hundred years or more later.

4. The Guru baptized only such men as were most willing to become a Singh. Even Bhai Nand Lal and Sainapat who had been so close to the Guru for many years were not baptised.

5. Gian Singh is of the view that Banda was not administered pahul.[1]

6. Mata Sundari would not have excommunicated him, if he had been a baptized Sikh.

7, Guru Gobind Singh had permitted any five baptized Khalsa to administer pahul to new converts. Banda never administered pahul to anyone. He simply recruited them in his army.

[1]*Panth Prakash*, 325.

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The Guru held a durbar towards the middle of September, 1708. It was attended by all the Sikhs and other leading men of the place. The Guru harangued the congregation on the inevitability of death and on the nature of his mission. As regards himself he repeated verse 1,901 of his *Krishna Avtar* written in 1686 at Paonta that he was not interested in worldly enjoyment and wealth. He wished to die the death of a martyr like his father Guru Tegh Bahadur and great grandfather Guru Arjan.

The Guru then declared that he was investing Banda with authority to complete his work of national struggle in Panjab. John Clark Archer says that the conference discussed some disagreement with the Mughals and reached a decision to wage a war against them.[1] He conferred the title of Bahadur on him. He was given an advisory council of five devoted Sikhs—Baj Singh, Binod Singh, Ram Singh, Vijay Singh and Kahan Singh.[2] Twenty-five other Sikh soldiers were chosen out of his contingent of three hundred to accompany him. He was supplied with a standard and a drum as symbols of temporal authority. A rescript called *Hukam Nama* or a letter of authority in the handwriting of the Guru instructing the Sikhs to join Banda Bahadur in his national war against religious and political tyranny, was provided. As an insignia of the temporal authority invested in him, the Guru gave Banda Bahadur his own sword, green bow and five arrows from his quiver. Three hundred Sikh cavaliers in battle array accompanied Banda's party to a distance of eight kilometres to give him the final send-off.

The Guru falls a victim to court conspiracy

The Emperor was enraged with the Guru for deputing Banda to Panjab to renew the struggle and kill Wazir Khan. He was also afraid that the Guru might join the Marathas in their struggle against the Mughals when the Emperor would be busy in warfare against his brother at Hyderabad. It was for this reason that though being in a hurry to reach Hyderabad as soon as possible to suppress the revolt of his brother Kam Bakhsh, he was staying at Nander and was not leaving the Guru alone.

Bahadur Shah had the mistaken belief that the Guru's death would be a fatal blow to his scheme of renewing the revolution in Panjab by Banda. He therefore entered into a conspiracy with the two Pathans

[1] *The Sikhs*, 208.

[2] Daya Singh, the sole surviving beloved one, had died at Nander about this time.

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deputed by Wazir Khan. Gul Khan who was given the title of Jamshed Khan and his brother Ataullah Khan were prevailed upon to put an end to the Guru's life as early as possible. Once in the enemy camp, it was absolutely impossible for the Guru to escape unhurt from court conspiracies, except by an artifice like the one adopted by Shivaji. An undiplomatic opponent of the Mughal government and living in their camp had to pay for his life. There was no other recourse.

The two Pathans regularly attended the daily sermons of the Guru and displayed keen interest in his teachings. They also won the confidence of other Sikhs. On 20 September, 1708, in the evening the Guru was taking rest in his tent. He was all alone in the tent, while a few Sikhs were loitering here and there. The Guru was half asleep with his back towards the door lying on his right side. Just at this moment the two Pathans came to visit the Guru. Nobody suspected any treachery. One of them Jamshed Khan[1] by name, a huge and strong fellow quietly entered the tent of the Guru. He thrust his dagger (Jamdhar) into the left side of the Guru near the heart. The Guru seized the hand of the assailant, pulled the dagger out of his body and plunged it into the stomach of the Pathan killing him on the spot. The other Pathan was cut to pieces by the Sikhs. It took place on 4 Bhadon Samvat 1765 [September, 1708]. Khafi Khan says the assailant of the Guru was not discovered. On the other hand the Guru was held responsible for the murder of Pathan Jamshed Khan, whose son was granted a khilat and compensated for the loss of his father.[2] A *Jarrah* or surgeon from the imperial camp already known to the Guru was immediately summoned. He applied ointment and stitched the wound. The Guru began to recover under proper care.[3]

The Emperor daily sent messengers to inquire after the Guru's health. The news that the Guru was speedily recovering dismayed him

[1]John Clark Archer on p. 208 and many others call him Gul Khan, a grandson of Paindah Khan killed in a battle by Guru Hargobind. He is the same person as Jamshed Khan, a spy of Wazir Khan and later on of Emperor Bahadur Shah as well.

Jodh Singh, *Sri Kalgidhar Hulas*, 270.

[2]*Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II 551.

[3]Mirza Muhammad Harsi, *Ibrat Nama*, p. 67; Sayyid Muhammad Qasim Husaini, p. 36, state that vide Gobind Singh was assassinated during this expedition by a Pathan soldier and he died of his wounds in 1708, at the town of Nander without leaving any male issue. George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England*, 263; Nanak Chand Naz, *Vachitra Natak*, 200.

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He now decided to adopt a cunning device frequently used by his father. He planned to contrive the death of the Guru in such a way that the Emperor's complicity should never come to the surface. He sent rich presents to the Guru as a token of his pleasure at the Guru's speedy convalescence. Knowing the Guru's weakness for bows and arrows, he included two strong and hard, beautifully bedecked bows. A clever emissary accompanied by Firoz Khan, the taluqdar of the place, was sent to deliver the gifts. His main duty was to see that the Guru himself tried the bows there and then. He was successful in inveigling the Guru to test the quality of the bows. The emissary enquired after Guru's health, praised his courage and condemned Gul Khan's treachery. Placing the gifts before the Guru he eulogized the bow, as a piece of decoration and not for use as it was too hard for a normal human being to use it. It touched the Guru's heart. He said his Sikhs could wield it. A couple of them tried but failed. The Guru was incensed. He got up and bent the bow. In doing so the stitches of his wound gave way and blood flowed profusely. The wound was sewn again, but it putrefied.[1]

The Guru's farewell function

As the condition of the wound grew worse, the Guru realized that his end had come, though he was not even forty-two yet. He gave five hundred rupees for a *langar* and a banquet at which he would meet all his Sikhs, and one hundred rupees for sandalwood and other articles for his obsequies. The farewell function was held on 3 October, 1708, before the Holy Granth. It was attended by all the Sikhs present at Nander including Bhai Mani Singh and Bhai Nand Lal Goya.[2] In his speech the Guru dwelt on the transitoriness of human life. Every thing which was born must die. The human body must perish sooner or later. God alone was immortal. For this reason everyone should remain cheerful and must not yield to sorrow and mourning. He told them that everything in this world happened according to the will of Almighty. He explained that he was satisfied with his performance for the fulfilment of his mission.

The Guru declared that he was merging himself into the Khalsa:

Khālas apnon rūp batāyo

[1]Daulat Rae, 232-35; Hakim Ram Kishan, 198-201.

[2]Macauliffe, I, lxxv; Nath Mal, *Amar Nama*, line 42. *Amar Nama* was composed immediately after the Guru's death.

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Khālas hī so hai mam kāmā
Bakhsh diyo Khalas ko jāmā[1]

[Khalsa is my own self. I have concern only with the Khalsa. I have bestowed my ownself on the Khalsa.]

Dhadi Nath Mal was in attendance upon the Guru at Nander. He recited ballads in the afternoon assemblies of Sikhs. The Guru instructed the Sikhs to continue listening to the ballad poetry of dhadi singers.[2]

Adi Granth made the Guru

The guruship was hereditary in Gobind Singh's family. He had lost all his children. The Guru was determined to avoid family feuds as well as imposters, as it had been experienced by his father. He made up his mind to abolish the human guruship.

Further Guru Gobind Singh foresaw the harmful consequences of the occupancy of the guru's office by undeserving persons. Besides several other sects were arising as offshoots of Sikhism which could destroy the unity and solidarity of the Sikh faith. The Guru realized that in future also disappointed aspirants for the office of the Guru would create some more sects leading to confusion and chaos. The only remedy to avoid all these dangers was the abolition of human guruship.

According to Guru Gobind Singh's court poet Sainapat, Bhai Nand Lal and Dhadi Nath Mal, all of whom were present at Nander, a day before the Guru's demise, the Sikhs enquired as to whom he was entrusting his Khalsa. Bhai Nand Lal in *Rahit Nama* says the Guru replied that he had three forms. The first was *Nirgun* or invisible, the second was his word and the third was *Sagun* or visible. After his physical death his soul would be invisible. His second form would be the *Adi Granth*, "*Dusar rup Granthji jān, mera rūp Granthji jān. Is men bhed nahin kuchh mān*. The third *sagun*, or visible rup was the Khalsa. He added that he had bestowed his physical form upon his Khalsa.

The Guru accompanied by his Khalsa went to the place where *Adi Granth* had been installed. He opened the holy book, placed five paise and a coconut before it, bowed before it, then went round the sacred scripture five times, bowed every time, and declared it as the Guru

[1]Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, 128.

[2]Koer Singh, *Gur Bilas Patshashi Dos*, 283-4; Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari, *Tarikh-e-Muzaffari*, 208.

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for all times to come.[1]

Up to this time the holy book was called *Pothi Sahib*. Gobind Singh named it *Granth* consisting of two words, *Gur* and *Ant* meaning eternal Guru. He asserted:

In future whoever wishes to seek enlightenment, guidance and solace, let him read the *Holy Granth*. This is your Guru for ever and ever till eternity.

The Guru said that he was entrusting the Khalsa to the care of *Akalpurkh* (God). He affirmed;

Dusar rup Granth Ji jān
Un ke ang mero kar mān
Jo Sikh Guru darshan ki chāh,
Darshan karo Granth ji āh.
Jo mam sāth chaho kar bāt
Granth Ji paṛhe bichāre sāth.
Jo mujh bachan sunan ki chāe
Granth Ji paṛhe sune chit lāe
Mero rūp Granth Ji jān
Is men bhed nahīn kuchh mān[3]

[*The Granth* is my second self. It should be taken for me. A Sikh who wants to see me, should have a look at the Granth. One who wishes to talk to me, should read the *Granth* and think over it. One who is anxious to listen to my talk, he should read the *Granth* and listen to its recitation with attention. Consider the *Granth* as my own-self. Have not the least doubt about it.[4]]

Guru Gobind Singh's last sermon

Guru Gobind Singh then sang his last self-composed hymn :

Āgyā bhat Akāl ki tabhi chalāyo Panth,
Sab Sikhan ko hukam hai Guru mānyo Granth.
Guru Granth ji mānyo pargat Gurān ki deh.[5]
Jo, Prabhu ko milna chahe khoj shabad men le.

[Under orders of the Immortal Being the Panth was started. All the Sikhs are enjoined to accept the Granth as their Guru. Consider the

[1]Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, p. 355-6.
[2]Koer Singh, *Gur Bilas Patshahi Das*, 286-87.
[3]See also Koer Singh, *Gur Bilas*, 21, 95-100.
[4]*Rahit Nama*, Chaupai.
[5]*The New Royal Persian-English Dictionary*, 257.

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Guru Granth as representing Gurus' body. Those who wish to meet God can find the way in its hymns.]

With his magnetic presence, great learning, rich and melodious voice and fiery eloquence, he convinced the Congregation of the importance of preserving the Panth in its purity. As we cannot find out the depth of a man's heart and perceive the things that he thinks, how can we know the mind of God who has made all these things, and comprehend His purpose ? Submit to His will. He knows what is best for us. Thrice is he armed who puts his trust in God. Accept the joys of life with gratitude, and its sorrows with resignation.

Raj karega Khalsa

The following two lines did not form a part of the original hymn :

Raj karega Khalsa āqi rahe na koe,

Khwār hoe sab milange bache sharan jo hoe.

S. C. Paul[1] gives the meaning of *Āqi* as "disobedient, rebellious" and the meaning of *Khwār* on p. 155 as "deserted, abandoned."

These two lines can therefore be translated as under :

[The Khalsa shall rule, no rebels shall exist; all the deserters shall join; all those seeking shelter shall survive.]

On May 12, 1710, Banda Bahadur conquered the Sarhind province lying between rivers Satluj and the Yamuna. Shortly afterwards he extended the boundaries of Sikh State to the Ganga in the east and up to the banks of river Ravi in the west. He might have conquered the west Panjab.

In October, 1714, owing to the diplomacy of Emperor Farrukh Siyar, nearly half of Banda's soldiers, all Sikhs, numbering about 15,000, deserted Banda, and took up service under the Mughals. This couplet seems to have been composed by Banda Bahadur himself with reference to his deserted followers. He joined it to Guru Gobind Singh's hymn, and began to sing it as a prayer, in order to keep his remaining followers called Bandai Khalsa, loyal to the cause of the Guru.

This view is also supported by Dr. Ganda Singh who says that this couplet in Sikh prayer was composed during the period of Banda Bahadur, 1710-1716.[1]

The Gurmata

The Guru said that secular affairs of the Sikhs would be regulated

[1]Vide Ganda Singh's article in *The Sikh Review*, January, 1973, 7-8.

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by a council of five beloved ones chosen for the time and meeting before the sacred book. He said that whenever any important question affecting the Panth was to be decided, a Sikh congregation was to be held, and from the whole assemblage five persons were to be chosen to settle the issue. In the council of five beloved ones he would be present in spirit. Their verdict called Gurmata was to be regarded as the judgement of God and the Guru. It was to be adopted by the whole assembly, and its execution was binding upon the whole Panth. Any infringement was to be considered sacrilegious.

He asserted that God had destined the Khalsa to be the future rulers of the country, and for the realization of this objective they must continue the struggle unabated. He then uttered the salutation coined by himself and joined by all those present, "*Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa, Wah Guru ji ki fatah.*" He joined the feast and bade them good-bye.

In eternity

Following the practice of ancient saints and sages who at the divine call would sit in a samadhi and expire, the Guru had prepared a funeral pyre within an enclosure of tent walls (*qanāt*). He banned admission into it. He was afraid that if people were permitted to come in, his wife, Mata Sahib Devi[1] and some Sikhs might jump into the funeral pyre. He had forbidden her and others from immolation. On the night of October 6-7, 1708, at 1 o'clock in the morning, the Guru got up, washed and bathed, and said prayers.

He dressed himself as usual and wore arms. At about 2 o'clock he entered the enclosure. The pyre had been prepared in such a way that the Guru could enter into it without the assistance of anybody else. It was covered with sandalwood, incense and perfumes.[2] After a while the pyre was seen ablaze, and all standing outside burst into tears and lamentation.[3]

[1]Jodh Singh, *Sri Kalgidhar Hulas*, 270; Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mahman Prakash*, II, 892-93.

[2]Sewa Das, *Parchian*, 181-83; Koer Singh, *Gur Bilas Patshahi Das*, 286-87; Kesar Singh Chhibbar, *Bansavali Nama*, (1779), Charan 10, Chaupais 649, 650, 651 ; *ba sandal-o-ūd-sokhtand*, Sayyid Muhammad Qasim Husaini, *Ibrat Nama*, 36; Khushwaqt Rae-*Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, 37b.

[3]Sainapat *Sri Gur Sobha*, 127-28; Sewa Das Udasi, *Parchian Sewa Das*, 181 83; Koer Singh *Gur Bilas Patshahi Das*, 60-61. 96-98, 124-37; Surup Das Bhalla, *Mahman Prakash*, II, 891-93; *Ibrat Miqal*, 36; *Tarikh-e-Muzaffari*, 152; Muhammad Ali Ansari, *Bahr-ul-Mawwaj*, 208.

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Proof of the Emperor's pious fraud

That Emperor Bahadur Shah was personally involved in the demise of Guru Gobind Singh is clear from the following facts:

1. The Emperor halted at Nander for seven weeks as long as the Guru was there. He left the place and crossed river Godavari in 4 or 5 hours after the Guru's last breath.[1] The Emperor was not in the Deccan on a picnic. For him every hour was critical. All the way from Ajmer to Nander he had never stayed anywhere for more than a couple of days. His brother Kam Bakhsh had set himself up as Emperor at Hyderabad, and was in open revolt against Bahadur Shah. At Nander the Emperor was not making any military preparations. They had already been made. He delayed his departure from fear of the Guru. He was not prepared to leave him alone. The Guru had already sent Banda Bahadur to Panjab to create disturbances there. He had openly defied the Emperor for his failure to punish Wazir Khan. The Emperor was afraid that the Guru might join the Marathas when he was involved in fighting with his brother.

2. On October 28, 1708, the Emperor ordered that a dress of mourning be presented to the son of Jamshed Khan Afghan who had been killed by Guru Gobind Singh. The imperial newsletter of Bahadur Shah's court records:

"Keh Guru Gobind Rae Jamshed Khan Afghan ra bajān kushtah būd khilat-e-mātami bapisar-e-Khan mazkūr mrahmat shud."[2]

Jamshed Khan was not a mansabdar of the Mughal court or a high dignitary upon whom alone such high honours were bestowed by the Emperor. He was a spy of Wazir Khan in the disguise of a soldier in attendance upon the Sayyid who was also deputed by the Governor of Sarhind.

3. It was two days later, on October 30, 1708, that the Emperor ordered for the grant of a robe of mourning to Guru Gobind Singh's family. The newsletter of the court states:

"26 Shaban year 2 (October 30, 1708) Hukam shud ke bapisar Guru Gobind Rao Nanak Panthi khilat mātami pidar badehand."[3]

It means that the Emperor gave not only equality to Jamshed Khan with Guru Gobind Singh in rank and status but also accorded him priority over the Guru.

[1]William Irvine, *Later Mughals*, I, 59.

[2]*Akhbarat-e-Durbar-e-Mualla*, quoted by Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, I, 83.

[3]ibid.

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On November 5, 1708, the Emperor ordered that the Hindu clerks employed in government departments and by nobles should be dismissed.[1] He did not issue this order when the Guru was alive.

4. "On 9 Ramzan year 2 (November 11, 1708), it was represented that the deceased Guru Gobind Singh had left a lot of goods. What were the orders about its forfeiture?"

"It was ordered that such chattels would not replete the imperial treasury. This was the property of a darvesh (saint). There should be no interference with it."[2]

The Emperor's refusal to attach the Guru's property against the will of his courtiers shows his diplomacy and cunning. It was purely an eyewash of his complicity, a pious fraud.

5. W. L. M'Gregor says that Guru Gobind Singh purchased a horse from Jamshed Khan Pathan for Rs. 7,000. The Guru did not pay the full amount. A dispute arose over the payment of the balance, and the Guru killed Jamshed Khan. Stung by remorse, he paid the money to his widow and took up her two young sons in his retinue and brought them up like a father. It was one of these children who thrust his dagger into the body of the Guru.[3]

This story does not appear plausible. In the first instance the price of Rs. 7,000 for a horse is not acceptable when an elephant could be got for Rs. 100 only.[4] Further, being in the imperial camp, he had no source of income. During fifteen months of his life in the Emperor's camp, he was passing through Uttar Pradesh, (UP) Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh (MP) and Maharashtra, where therew ere too few Sikh merchants to make large offerings to him. But the most convincing proof of its fallacy is that the Emperor did not offer the dress of mourning to Jamshed Khan's son during Guru's lifetime. He did so after the Guru's death, three weeks later.

Did Gobind Singh change Nanak's religion?

Guru Gobind Singh did not introduce any change in the essential principles established by Nanak. He made certain changes in their interpretation.

1. Guru Nanak's God was the Creator, Sustainer, Bestower of Gifts, Embodiment of Kindness and Love. To Guru Gobind Singh

[1]Akhbarat, Bhatnagar, *Life and Times of Sawai Jai Singh*, 63, fn. 108.
[2]ibid; Irvine, *Later Mugnals*, I, 90.
[3]*History of the Sikhs*, I, 99.
[4]Vide, infra, p. 344, No. 20.

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God was in addition the wielder of arms, punisher of the evil-doers, destroyer of the forces of the wicked and liberator of mankind. Nanak's God was only Kartapurkh or the Creator. Gobind Singh's God was Wahguru,[1] the creator of good and destroyer of evil. Nanak's God was kind and benevolent to all. Gobind Singh's God rewarded goodness and chastised wickedness. In Var Sri Bhagautiji Ki Guru Gobind Singh says that God first created the double-edged sword (Khanda) and then created this world. [*Khanda prithmai saj kai jin sub sansar upaya.*]

2. Nanak's remedy for human ills was Nam or prayer. Gobind Singh added action to prayer. Action implied good living accompanied by determination to fight evil to a finish. To Nanak Word was law, to Gobind Singh Word and deed were the law. Nanak insisted on soul force alone, Gobind Singh added physical force to it.

3. Nanak preached love and goodness for all, good and bad. Gobind Singh preached goodness for the good and retribution for the rogue. Nanak wanted his followers to be saints. Gobind Singh wished them to be saints and soldiers. Nanak insisted on rosary, Gobind Singh on rosary and rapier. Nanak tried to make his disciples *Bhai* or brothers. Gobind Singh was keen to see them *Bhai* in times of peace and *Sardars* at the time of war. He was trying to infuse the spirit of heroism and to dispel cowardice and fear.

4. Nanak had aimed at spiritual freedom. Gobind Singh added to it political freedom, without which spiritual freedom was impossible. Nanak laid emphasis on Bhakti or spiritualism. Gobind Singh combined Bhakti with Shakti, or spiritualism with political power.

5. Gobind Singh introduced the sword in the Sikh prayer. "Having first remembered the Sword, meditate on Guru Nanak."[2] He prescribed the emblem of the double-edged sword, Khanda, on the Sikh flag.

6. Nanak had prescribed Charanpahul for initiating his disciples. The new Sikhs drank water in which the Guru had dipped his toe. It developed spirit of humility and meekness. Gobind Singh wished to make his disciples bold and plucky. He therefore changed the form of baptism, and administered to his Khalsa sweet water stirred with a double-edged dagger in an iron vessel, and added Singh to their name.

7. Nanak had invested the guruship in man. Gobind Singh invested it in the *Holy Granth* for all times to come in order to avoid all possi-

[1]According to Gobind Singh Mansukhani Wahiguru is a fusion of four names of God. Wa represents Wasdev. Hi stands for Hari, Gu refers to Gobind and Ru to Rama. (*The Quintessence of Sikhism*, 93.)

[2]ibid, 24-25.

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ble family feuds as well as imposters and to check any division in Sikhism.

8. Nanak blessed Babar with kingship. He considered the Mughal government better than that of the Lodis. He recommended another foreign government in place of the existing foreign government. Gobind Singh wanted a national government pure and simple. He strove for it and he sacrificed everything to obtain it.

9. Guru Nanak's greeting was Sat Kartar, Sat Sri Akal. Gobind Singh's greeting was Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa, Wah Guru ji ki Fatah.

10. Some critics allege that Guru Gobind Singh believed in polytheism against Guru Nanak's monotheism. This assumption is absolutely wrong and baseless. He did not believe in gods and goddesses. Erroneous conclusions have been drawn from his words and deeds. The Guru used the same word in a different context and with a different meaning. For example the Guru says:

Kal sabhon ko pekh tamasa
Anteh kal kart hai nasha
Ant kart sabh jag ko kaia
Nam kal tan te jag dala.

In these verses the word Kal has occurred thrice, the first means God, second time and third death. Similarly, Bhagwati stands for God or His power of manifestation, Nature and the Holy Sword. Arms are given the names of goddesses. Kali is a goddess as well as a cannon. Malcolm failed to understand the spirit of the Guru. He believed that the Guru was a polytheist. His idea was blindly accepted by many later writers, including Sir Lepel Griffin and Syed Muhammad Latif.

On this point the Guru made his position absolutely clear in *Zafar Nama*. In verse no. 95 the Guru says:

"The idol-worshipping hillmen want to kill me, because they are idol-worshippers and I am an idol-breaker."

An estimate

How shall we appraise Guru Gobind Singh? It is indeed a difficult task, yet in order to complete this narrative something is to be said on this point.

In physique Gobind Singh was a handsome young man, of medium height and build, with heavy jet black hair, high forehead and brows, large and piercing eyes, rosy cheeks, red lips, exquisite teeth; a perfectly pleasing personality as a whole, exhaling fascinating fragrance of the flower of life. There was fire in his eyes, resonance in voice,

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and every feature, was lofty, thoughtful and innocent. He was ever cheerful, impressive and commanding, a prince of the blood.

He was always well-dressed and well-armed. He wore a sword and a shield, bow and arrows. His sword was sparkling and shield strong. His bow was of green colour and arrows were tipped with gold. Such arrows were used only in the battlefield so that the others could identify the assailant. He wore a plume on his turban and got the appellation of *Kalgidhar*. He rode generally on a blue horse and was called *nile ghore dā swār* or the rider of the blue horse. While on horseback he carried a white hawk on his right hand. The people hailed him as *chityān bājānwālā* or the hunter with the white hawk.

Thus in physical appearance alone Gobind Singh was the beau ideal of the Panjabi youth. He was the most agreeable person after their hearts' longing. There was a peculiar glamour in him which fascinated one and all. His name took their fancy and his appearance captivated them. The young Guru's image was in their hearts. His sentences were on their tongue. His poems were sung with gusto. His word was magic and witchery. His looks were intoxicating. His ideas were thundering enough to wake the dead. In short he was the embodiment of *Chaṛhdi Kala* or exhilarating inspiration. His repulses against the Mughal armies did not detract much from his popularity.

The Guru was looked upon as God by many. To such people he administered a sharp rebuke and declared himself a servant of the Almighty:

Jo ham ko Parmeshar uchre hain
Te sab Narak kund men paṛe hain
Moh ko dās Tawan kā jāno
Ya me bhed na ranch pachhāno[1]

[Those who call me God, will fall into the pit of hell; consider me His servant; do not have the least doubt about it.]

As a religious guide Gobind Singh could say the grandest things in the commonest language, and his words entered the soul of all. To him fire was God of those who performed sacrifices. For men of small understanding God was in symbols. The thinker found God in the heart, and for the true believer the Divine was everywhere. He considered joys and sorrows of life like lights and shadows always accompanying each other. He was indulgent towards the poor and towards

[1] *Bachitra Natak*, Section VI, Chaupai, 32; Pandit Narain Singh, *Das Granthi Satik*, 237.

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women upon whom the weight of society fell most heavily. The faithful devotees were raised to a high pedestal where they could have a glimpse of God. His religious discourses thrilled his congregations.

Most of his predecessors had insisted on submission and surrender. It was the most suitable policy for that age. But the times had changed. This factor was clearly perceived by Guru Gobind Singh. The passive policy stood as a great hindrance in the path of progress. It led not only to stagnation but also to depression and despondency. Gobind Singh infused in the minds of his followers the spirit of confidence and courage, and placed before them the goal of political sovereignty. The salvation of his country was his only aim.

The Guru was a great linguist. He wrote extensively on a wide range of subjects in many languages, in Braj Bhasha, Hindi, Persian and Panjabi. He was also a poet of high order. It was through his plain, pithy poetry that he penetrated into the soul of all those with whom he came into contact. He drank his longest religious draughts from the fountains of the ancients. His band of 52 poets ransacked the whole range of popular Sanskrit literature to pick up events and incidents of heroic fights against evil and wickedness. They were presented in simple language with inspiring chivalry and bravery.

The Guru showed the way how misery and misfortune should be faced. He had lost everything. Having sacrificed all his children, thousands of his Khalsa, his lands and property, and his own life being in perpetual danger, he betrayed not the slightest tinge of despair and despondency. Thereby he depicted his marvellous power of endurance and optimism. *Zafar Nama* unfolds his invincible will-power, his faith that whatever God did was to his advantage and for his good, his fearlessness and boldness in condemning the emperor, and his highest sense of dignity, his faith that his Khalsa would fully retaliate.

In the capacity of a leader the Guru gave light. He taught, enlightened, enkindled, thought aloud, spoke aloud, proclaimed human rights, sowed enthusiasm broadcast and made thought a whirlwind. He tried to sublimate the multitude. The bare feet, the naked arms, the rags, the shades of ignorance, the depths of servility, the abyss of gloom, all were employed in the conquest of his ideal. He had but one passion, and one thought, the right to freedom. He was a marvellous lover of liberty. His speech was inspiring, and it impressed as a hymn. He believed not in divine rights but in human rights. He loved the word citizen, but preferred the word man. He was a humanist and his creed was humanism. He was the greatest genius the Panjab had ever

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seen since the death of Harsha. He put new ideas before the people, and changed their way of thinking and outlook on life's problems. He awakened the dormant spirit of his followers.

His *dharma yudh* was directed against oppression, bigotry and injustice. He waged a moral war for victory of good over evil, triumph of virtue over vice, success of holy sword over unholy gun, and conquest of a pious dervish over a cruel king. His *dharma yudh* represented a blending of *bhakti* and *shakti*. *Bhakti* signified devotion to God and *Shakti* stood for strength and courage.

Guru Gobind Singh did not proclaim himself a ruler. He conquered no lands. He issued no coins. He introduced no administrative system or any legal code. He did not wish to establish any independent state for himself. He accepted the Mughal rule. He used Mughal coins. Of course, his Sikhs did not go to Mughal courts for a decision of any legal case.

At the same time he did not consider himself a subject of any hill raja or a Mughal governor. When they interfered with his peaceful life and peaceful programme of reorganising his disciples he went to war with them.

He believed in dreams. He was confident that his dream of independence would come out true. He was not dismayed by the citadels built upon all sides against human race by superstitions, prejudices, and despotism. In a difficult situation he possessed all the essentials of sublimity. He would not wait for the dawn of independence which might take long, very long. He would light a fire to cause the dawn. He would not mind a light disturbed by smoke like our independence in 1947 accompanied by holocaust. He would fly to the dazzling heights of his ideal through thunder and lightning, hail and snow. He preferred to be the angel with the wings of an eagle rather than the angel with the wings of a swan.

Diplomacy was not his forte. Without it there was no chance of success at the Mughal court. He was a saint and soldier, simple and straightforward. He ignored the intricacies and delicacies of political and military life. He knew how to fight and inspire. But he could not use deceit against deceit, cunning against cunning, intrigue against intrigue, and craftiness against craftiness. He was waging a holy war against the most artful and wily government. In his purity and simplicity he placed his trust in it, and paid the highest and heaviest price under the sun for it.

The glorious combatants of freedom, even when they fail, are vener-

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able. In the failure of battle for right and justice they have greater majesty. Victory deserves the applause of the people; but a heroic defeat deserves their compassion. One is magnificent, the other is sublime. Martyrdom is more glorious than success. The martyrs struggle for the great work with the inflexible logic of the ideal. They give their lives, a pure gift, for progress. They accomplish the will of providence. They perform a religious act. At the appointed hour, obedient to the divine will, they enter into the tomb. In this stoical disappearance they leave behind a landmark on the path of progress.

The Guru walked straight to his goal like a bird flying home against wind and storm with calmness and confidence. His ideas flashed into the future. He saw things which were hidden to other men. As a brave soldier and leader, Gobind Singh is undoubtedly amongst the greatest saviours of mankind.

The Guru's four acts of crowning glory are: (a) creation of the Khalsa, (b) bestowal of political sovereignty on the Khalsa, (c) his selection of Banda Bahadur for the establishment of the Khalsa rule, and (d) declaring the *Holy Granth* as the eternal Guru.

"Thus we see," says Sir Jadunath, "that the Mughal Government under Aurangzeb did succeed in breaking up the Guru's power. It robbed the Sikhs of common leader and a rallying centre."[1] He forgets that like sun and moon, people also have an eclipse. All is well, provided the eclipse does not degenerate into perpetual darkness.

Guru Gobind Singh's desire, "Mother dear, I have been considering how I may confer empire on the Khalsa",[2] was realized in nineteen months after the death of the Guru, though for the time being temporarily. On May 12, 1710, Wazir Khan was dead and gone. The entire province of Sarhind from the Satluj to the Yamuna (Bāwani Sarhind, worth fifty-two lakhs of rupees annually) lay at the feet of the Khalsa. They set themselves up as rulers, issued their own coin, and carried their arms up to the Ganga in the east and to the Ravi on the west. Emperor Bahadur Shah, despaired of success against Banda Bahadur, followed to the grave within two years. In fifty years' time the Khalsa ruled supreme over the whole country lying between the Ganga and the Indus. The story starting from Talwandi ends for the time being at Nander.

Guru Gobind Singh lived throughout his life up to the vow that

[1] *A Short History of Aurangzeb*, 159.
[2] Macauliffe, V, 109.

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legendary Arjan is said to have taken when along with his four brothers and wife he was banished to the forest:

Na dainy na plāyanam

[I will neither supplicate nor flee the battlefield.]

Aurangzeb and Gobind Singh, a comparison

Aurangzeb was the greatest emperor of his time. So was Guru Gobind Singh the greatest spiritual leader in India. Both were destined to shape the political history of this country. Both were intensely religious, one orthodox Sunni, the other staunch Sikh. Aurangzeb, by his policy of converting Hindu India into a purely Islamic state, destroyed not only his own dynasty but also the Islamic state which had existed in this country for eight hundred years, only for the sake of converting a few lakhs Hindus to Islam.

In ancient times gods had created Durga to destroy the demons. In medieval times the Pandits had created Rajputs to face the rising flood of Islam. In modern times Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa which wrecked the Mughal Empire in the north and exterminated the foreigners from the north-west who had been mainly responsible for preserving the Muslim rule in this country for eight hundred years.

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CHAPTER 17

Guru Gobind Singh's *Hukam Namas*

While waging a holy war, *dharma yudh*, Guru Gobind Singh must have issued a large number of *Hukam Namas* or written orders. At present only 33 *Hukam Namas* are known to exist. They have been arranged by Dr. Ganda Singh and commented upon by Dr. Loehlin. Many more are sure to come to light in due course. Like those of Guru Tegh Bahadur, they were addressed by Guru Gobind Singh to congregations of various places and in some cases to individuals. They are orders or requests for financial assistance or for arms, horses and young men of dash and daring to fight in his army, or invitation to meet the Guru on a festival day or to warn the devotees not to hand over their offerings to *masands*, but to present them to the Guru personally or through their own representatives.

Guru Gobind Singh generally dictated the *Hukam Namas* and put certain signs or formulas in his own handwriting at the top to show their authenticity. They did not bear Guru's signatures. A peculiar device was adopted by Guru Gobind Singh as a mark of authority. At the head of the *Hukam Nama* one or two daggers were drawn. To their right were put two dots and a hyphen and to their left was shown only one dot. Below the daggers there were two small perpendicular lines. Under them there was number 1, and beneath it one or more Persian letters indicating *sahi* or correct. Under S there were two more lines and below them one large number 1, signifying One Supreme Lord. This was followed by two or more R's and a dot. Further down there were two or more R and a dot, followed by two horizontal lines, and a brief substance of the subject-matter like the present day shorthand. For instance.

"1) s bh." 1 stands for one *tola*, s for *sona* (gold) and bh for *bhejo* (send)=Send one *tola* (12·5 grams) of gold. While concluding the Guru writes that the messenger should be paid Rs. 5.00 or even more for his travelling expenses. After this the detailed note was written by

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the scribe at the dictation of the Guru. The Guru maintained a regular office of correspondence. Copies of the *Hukam Namas* were preserved. They bore dates and in some cases even number of words and the number of lines to check tampering.

These *Hukam Namas* are of great historical importance from religious, social, economic, political and literary consideration. The religious and social value of these letters of authority lies in the fact that they disclose the condition of *sangats* or congregations. They accepted them with deepest respect and veneration. The Guru bestowed upon the sangats great love and esteem. He addressed them by names. He called them his Khalsa, his very self, his delight. The response of the Sikhs was spontaneous and immediate. The Guru gave instructions in his *Hukam Namas* about conducting religious assemblies regularly. He also dwelt on the necessity of maintaining *langars*. He inspected some of them personally. He encouraged competition among various *langars*, and awarded prizes to the best ones. He invited the *sangats* to meet him. He issued instructions not to give the offerings to *masands*, but to present them personally to the Guru. A *Hukam Nama* dated 4 November, 1700, instructed *sangats* to keep a pot in every home to put in their offerings. He instructed the *sangats* to preserve unity and to avoid factions, or other differences.

A *Hukam Nama* addressed to the *sangat* of Pakpattan now in Pakistan as dictated by the Guru to the scribe and translated by Dr. Loehlin reads as follows:

"In the Name of One God, the True Guru. This is the Guru's order. The Guru will protect the entire congregation of Patan Farid.

"Let the *sangat* meditate on the Guru and its life will be blessed.

"The whole *sangat* is my Khalsa. Whatever is collected for the Guru is not to be given to any *masand*.

"Whichever Sikh comes to the Guru, let him bring it himself. Whoever cannot come, let him keep it. Then when the Guru's written order comes let him execute a banker's draft and send it. This is my wish that one tola of gold requested be sent by bank draft by the congregation. It is my wish that whoever fulfils this request shall prosper. 9 lines.

"Let the entire *sangat* put on their weapons and come together for the Holi festival. They will rejoice. 11 lines.

"Do not give the offerings for the Guru to anyone. When you come, bring them yourself to the Guru, but the Guru's Sikhs must not associate with any *masand*, man or woman.

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"Whoever obeys this order will have his heart's desires fulfilled. This is my wish. 14 lines."

The Guru's demand of certain articles from a particular place indicates that it was noted for the manufacture or production of those articles. Soldiers, oxen, camels, gold and milch cattle were generally asked for, from the *sangats* in the Panjab. Guns with their equipment were required from the *sangats* at Lucknow, cloth from Banaras, *nawar* for cots, turbans, spices *surahis* (clay water jars of narrow mouth), cups, talking birds and messenger pigeons from Patna, and swords, shields, other arms, fine muslin and war elephants from Dhaka.

The Guru insisted that money and gold should be sent by *hundis* equivalent to drafts of these days. A net of banking business houses controlled by Jagat Seths or Marwari bankers existed all over India and in Central and West Asia. It shows that Anandpur in Guru Gobind Singh's time had grown into an important commercial town so as to have a branch office of this grand banking business. Further we come to know rise and fall in money values depending upon the political situation in the country. A *Hukam Nama* of 1700 puts price of one *tola* of gold nearly at Rs. 13.00 and other *Hukam Namas* of 1706 and 1707 at Rs. 20.

The Guru laid emphasis on immediate execution of his orders. He could not tolerate any delay on the part of a messenger in conveying his *Hukam Nama* to a particular *sangat*. He instructed the congregation not to entrust him with any business in future and to employ another messenger in his place.

Some political information can also be gleaned from these *Hukam Namas*. One dated October 21, 1706, asked for two pairs of good oxen to be used in a carriage as the Guru proposed to travel south to meet Emperor Aurangzeb. The Guru was then staying at Damdama Sahib in Bhatinda district. He invited Sikhs to accompany him. Another *Hukam Nama* of October 2, 1707, says that the Guru was in the camp of the new emperor Bahadur Shah. It states that the Emperor gave the Guru a warm welcome and conferred upon him a rich robe of honour including a jewelled necklace worth Rs. 60,000. He said that he would soon return to Anandpur, where his Khalsa should meet him.

A brief summary of the 33 *Hukam Namas* of Guru Gobind Singh is given below according to the geographical location of the *sangats* addressed by the Guru. In a few cases the place is not mentioned. Such *Hukum Namas* are given under the heading miscellaneous. The

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place from where the *Hukam Nama* was issued is not given. As the *Hukum Namas* were sent by messengers, there was no necessity to mention it. The dates are generally there. From these dates and the name of the *sangat* the place of writing can be determined. We will follow the *sangats* from west to the east regardless of the dates.

Out of 33 *Hukam Namas* 18 were addressed to various *sangats* after the creation of the Khalsa. Only in his last *Hukam Nama* addressed from Bahadur Shah's camp to the *sangat* of Banaras dated 3 February, 1708, one person bears the suffix *Singh* with his name. All others have their original names without *Singh*. Further the Guru invited Sikhs to meet him on the occasions of Diwali and Holi, and the name of Baisakhi festival is mentioned only once.

Summary of Hukam Namas

1. To Pakpattan in Pakistan: Anandpur, February 1, 1700.1½ *tola* of gold worth Rs. 19/25 paise brought by messenger Santokha has been received. Send more offerings including three turbans and robes of honour personally. They are not to be given to *masand*.

2. Another *Hukam Nama* is also addressed to the same *sangat*.

3. To Chola in Majha. Damdama Sahib, March 4, 1706. Send one *tola* of gold worth Rs. 20/-. Fully armed young men are invited. The Guru lives in the *sangat*. The *sangat* is blessed.

4. To Naushahra Pannuan, District Amritsar. Anandpur, October 5, 1699. Come on the Diwali festival day with offerings. Do not give the offerings to *masand* or anybody else. Send one *tola* of gold by *hundi*. You are my Khalsa and my source of happiness. Blessings for the *sangat*.

5. Anandpur, November 4, 1700. Do not give offerings for the Guru to anyone. Bring them personally or send by *hundi*. Do not trust *masand* whether man or woman. Come fully armed on the occasion of Holi. Send one *tola* of gold by *hundi*.

6. Anandpur, February 6, 1702. Send one *tola* of gold by *hundi* at once. Have no connection with *masands*. Those who come to meet the Guru will be blessed. Treat every Sikh whom you meet as a brother. Cherish great love for all Sikhs.

7. To Dasuha, District Hoshiarpur. Anandpur, November 4, 1700.

Do not give offerings to anyone without the Guru's permission. Send them through a representative of the *sangat*, or a messenger or by *hundi*. Send 1½ *tolas* of gold by *hundi* immediately. Do not trust *masands* at all.

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8. To Machhiwara, District Ludhiana. Anandpur, March 12, 1699. Bring the offerings and *tithes* yourselves. Send one *tola* of gold through messenger. Do not trust *masands*.

9. To Rupa in Malwa, Panjab. Undated. Anandpur or Damdama Sahib. Bhai Mehar Chand of Rupa is immediately required to meet the Guru.

10. Undated. The Sikhs of Rupa are requested to send milch cows and buffaloes, and oxen and horses with their fodder.

11. Dated August 2, 1696. A company of horsemen and footmen fully armed with guns, and with one camel should join speedily.

12. February 6, 1702. Bhai Mehar Chand, the confidential writer (*Khufiā Nawīs*) should send Rs. 25 immediately by *hundi*. Do not trust *masands*. Come fully armed to see the Guru. Be helpful to other Sikhs.

13. To the *sangats* of Bhai Rupa and Bhairaran. Damdama, October 21, 1706. Send two pairs of good oxen as we are going to the Deccan (to see Emperor Aurangzeb). Those Sikhs who wish to accompany us, should come at once.

14. To Rampura Phūl, August 2, 1696. Bhai Taloka (later founder of Nabha house) and Bhai Rama (later founder of Patiala house) are requested to join immediately with a body of horsemen.

15. To two villages, Dhaul Kalān and Dhaul Khurd Agra. October 2, 1707. We have had a successful meeting with Emperor Bahadur Shah. He granted us a rich robe of honour and a jewelled necklace worth Rs. 60,000 as a gift. We shall shortly return to Anandpur. Then come fully armed to meet us. Send two *tolas* of gold worth Rs. 40 by *hundi*. If the messenger delays, excommunicate him.

16. To Khara in U P. Agra, October 2, 1707. Our meeting with Emperor Bahadur Shah was very successful. He gave us a rich robe of honour and a jewelled necklace worth Rs. 60,000. We shall shortly return to Anandpur. Then come armed to meet us. Send one *tola* of gold worth Rs. 20 by a fast runner.

17. To Lucknow. Anandpur, February 17, 1694. Send one cannon and ammunition.

18. To Sangat Pirag, (Prayag—Allahabad). Anandpur, February 3, 1702.

Send five *tolas* of gold at once. Do not trust *masands*. Come to meet the Guru with arms. Have nothing to do with *masands*. Love all the Sikhs and develop fellowship with them. Harm no Sikh.

19. To Banaras. Bahadur Shah's camp, February 3, 1708.

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We have granted to Kirpa Singh Rs. 40. Give this amount to him immediately.

20. To Patna, to Mehar Chand and Dharam Chand. Anandpur, February 6, 1702. Send Rs. 101 for an elephant by *hundi*. Give no offerings to a *masand*, man or woman. Help other Sikhs.

21. To Dhaka, undated. Send one war elephant.

22. Undated. Give offerings of cloth, arms and shields to Bhai Hulas Chand and to nobody else. He will bring these gifts for the Diwali festival. Bhai Mehar Chand should not worry. The Guru will protect him.

23. Dated Anandpur, May 22, 1691. Send Rs. 900 by draft for red cloth and swords.

24. Dated at Anandpur, February 3, 1702. To Bhai Brindaban, Gulab Chand. Send Rs. 101 by *hundi* at once. Come armed with offerings for the Guru. Give nothing to *masands*. Do not trust them. Treat every Sikh as a brother. Give Rs. 5 to the messenger.

Miscellaneous

25. July 14, 1698. To Shahzada Azim-ud-din, Cantonment *sangat*. Send 100 *tolas* of gold.

26. Undated. Friends are invited to visit the Guru.

27. Dated January 17, 1692. Bhai Gurdas is asked to bring offerings.

28. Dated December 25, 1692. The *Hukam Nama* is addressed to Bhai Gurdas for the whole *sangat*.

29. Undated. To Bhai Ramdas Ugarsen. Thanks for sending a team of oxen to 'Mata Ji' for the Guru.

30. Dated 1702. To *sangat* of Rupiana. Send two *tolas* of gold at once by *hundi*. Do not trust *masands*.

31. Dated April 25, 1699. To Bhai Des Raj of *sangat* Sahland Phāphaṛian. Give offerings only to Des Raj.

32. Dated October 5, 1699. To the *sangat* of Sarangdev. Bring offerings for the Guru personally. Do not send them through anybody else. Send two *tolas* of gold by a *hundi*. Come to meet the Guru on the occasion of Diwali.

33. Dated 1704. To Bhai Sukhia, Bhai Mukhia and Bhai Parsa, and the *sangat*. Send robust young horsemen and bold foot soldiers armed with guns.[1]

[1]Loehlin, *The Tenth Guru's Hukam Namas*, 60-67.

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Rates at Delhi

In 1707 following were the rates at Delhi per rupee, while gold was sold at Rs. 20 per *tola*.

Wheat	20 seers.
Barley	27
Gram	25
Sukhdas rice	10
Dal Mung	15
Mash	18
Moth	20
Arhar	18
Ghi	2
Mustard oil	7
Shakkar[1]	12

The sangat of Banur

Hukam Nama issued to the *sangat of Banur*[2] (near Rajpura, Panjab).

Ajit Singh Baagha has brought to light another *Hukam Nama* of Guru Gobind Singh. It was issued to the sangat of Banur in 1698.

+ + - -

7555

Ik Om Guru Sat Sarbat Sangat Banur ki mera Khalsa hai Kār huzur liawani guru tusādā bhalā karegā, sona bhejna.

Ik Onkar Satguru Jio

Banur ki Guru rekhia karegā Sangat Guru Guru japnā janam saurega Sangat mera Khalsa hai Kar huzur lai āwanī Guru tusāda bhalā karegā. Ik tola sona farmaish bhejni Jo Sikh farmaish degu so nihāl hogu Guru ke nawit ka hovai so apne pas rakhna Jab Sangat huzur avai tān āp huzur lai āwanā Bina nawai sammat de Hukamnavai kise nu nahi denā Jis pās nawai sammat da Hukamnava dek āhu tis nu denā. Tusin mere farzand ho jo Sikh Diwali nu avagu, so nihāl hogu. Huzur di pahul ai lainī Jo Sikh Huzur di pahal ai laigu nihal hogu. Bisakhi Holi te hathiar bann kai pahul beni satran 13. Sammat 1) 755[3].

In 7555 the last number 5 stands for 1 and it is to be placed before 7 making it 1755. This appears to be the secret device to show the authenticity of the letter.

[1]Anonymous, *Tarikh-Bahadur Shahi*, E&D, VII, 566.

[2]Banur lies on the road from Rajpura to Chandigarh.

[3]Ajit Singh Baagha, Banur had orders, *The Sikh Review*, January, 1973, 17-20.

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Translation

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7555

With the Name of One Lord and the True Guru. The congregation of Banûr, in its entirety, is my Khalsa. The offerings should be brought to the holy presence. The Guru will bless you. Send oue tola of gold. With the name of One Lord and True Guru.

The Guru will take care of Banur. The congregation of devotees should repeat the name of the Guru. This will ameliorate their lives. The congregation is my Khalsa. The offerings should be brought to the *Holy Presence*. The Guru will bless you. Send one *tola* of gold as the specially ordered requirement. The Sikh who honours the order for the special requirement will be blessed. Whatever has been reserved as the tithes for the Guru should be kept by the devotees in their own custody. When the congregation happens to come to the *Holy Presence* of the Guru, the offerings should be personally brought. Do not pass on the offerings to anyone, unless authorized according to the edict of the New Era. Give offerings only to the authorized agent in accordance with the orders that will be laid down in the edict to be issued in the New Era. You are my sons. A Sikh who comes on Diwali shall be blessed. Take *pahul* from the Guru. A Sikh who gets the *pahul* from the Guru shall be blessed. Get baptism on Baisakhi, Holi by wearing arms. Lines 13, Sammat 1755.

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CHAPTER 18

The Dasam Granth

Guru Gobind Singh possessed a brilliant and many-sided striking personality. He was a saint-soldier supreme. It was a rare combination that the Guru was a master of pen and sword.

In reality his pen also served the purpose of a sword. Most of his poetry is imbued with the spirit of the sword. He had the sword by him when he held the pen in his right hand. He wrote martial poetry which could create fire in the minds of his followers to carry on perpetual fight for the protection of dharma, to uphold righteousness and to destroy the wicked and the tyrant.

In every work, in thought, word and deed, the hero is represented full of courage, dash and daring. In *Krishna Avtar*[1] the Guru explains the purpose of creating this literature. His aim was to inspire his Sikhs for a holy war (*dharma yudh*). He wished to remove any feeling of fear and cowardice in fighting against the mighty Mughal Empire. Durga, being a woman, destroyed the devilish demons. Would his Khalsa remain behind? His message was of hope, courage, devotion, freedom and self-reliance.

The Guru started writing at Anandpur about 1684 at the age of 18. In *Krishna Avtar* he says he had composed about a thousand verses at Anandpur before he left for Paonta. Aurangzeb had dismissed poets and musicians employed at his court when he left for the Deccan in 1682. A number of them joined Guru Gobind Singh's durbar.

The Guru wrote a good deal of his poetry at Paonta from 1685 to 1688 sitting on the banks of river Yamuna. Bhai Santokh Singh says :

"*Base Paonte nagar majhara, Jahi Sri Yamuna sundar dhara;*
Shila bisal tir thir jahān, Kari majjan ko baithe tahān;
Sri mukh te kavita shubh rache, Chhand, swayye shubh khache."[2]

On his return to Anandpur he composed some works on the banks

[1]Verse 2491.
[2]*Suraj Prakash*, 2367.

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of river Satluj from 1689 to 1698. *Fatah Nama* and *Zafar Nama* were composed at Jatpura and Dina in Malwa respectively in 1705. *Adi Granth* was re-written at Damdama Sahib in 1706. Some works of the Guru were also collected at Damdama Sahib in 1706.

The Guru's manuscripts had perished in the Sarsa river flooded by the rains on December 22, 1704. A few copies of many of his works had been made by some of his fifty-two poets and scholars. They were later on collected and arranged by Bhai Mani Singh. He named the collection *Daswen Padshah ka Granth* or *The Dasam Granth*.

Four copies of the *Dasam Granth* were made. One was kept at Akal Bunga, Amritsar, second at Patna, third at Anandpur, and fourth at Damdama Sahib.[1]

The *Dasam Granth* of Guru Gobind Singh consists of divine prayers, tales of heroism and morality from ancient Indian literature of old sages, saints, savants and seers. The Dasam Granth is not a purely religious book. It is a collection of religious, secular, philosophical and historical literature. The Guru's compositions are in Avadhi, Braj, Hindi, Panjabi and Persian with Arabic words here and there. They are in Gurmukhi script. *Fatah Nama*, *Zafar Nama* and *Hikayat* are in Persian script. Some hymns are in pure Panjabi of Majha. They are all in poetry in different metres.

The *Dasam Granth* reveals the national spirit throughout. The episodes mentioned therein tell us heroic stories of the great deeds of our ancestors in the past. The incarnations in Puranic literature have been converted into great warriors. Most of the characters appear before the readers as generals and soldiers wielding sword successfully against demons. The skirmishes and battles exhibit nothing but bravery and glory of the gods and goddesses. In these wars women and children have been shown fighting spiritedly along with men. People of all classes and castes participated in the struggle for virtue against vice, for goodness against evil, and for truth against falsehood. The spirit of self-sacrifice pervades in the whole composition. Every praise is showered on the fighters for freedom who valiantly opposed oppression and tyranny. The stories make a strong appeal to common people, and arouse in their minds sentiments of patriotism and nationalism. The scenes described consist in ferocious duels, wrestling bouts, galloping cavalry, blare of trumpets, neighing of steeds, striking spurs into a horse, the martial music giving a thrill for fighting with

[1]Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, III, 595; *Panth Prakash*, 304.

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arrows and bullets fearlessly, shouts of soldiers, groans of the dying, all strike terror and dismay into enemy heart.

The stirring stories of heroic fighting infuse blood even in dry bones. The timid persons are excited with the love of war, and got ready to fight in the battlefield. Even a *Banya* took a dose of opium, rushed into the thick of the battle, killed many enemies and returned safely with a few scars. By creating this literature and by giving sermons regularly to large audiences, he was preparing their minds for the forthcoming fight he was planning.

As a relief to the bloody deeds on the battlefield, there are lovely scenes of play, dancing halls, Phag or the spring festival of Holi, marriages, heavy rains, flooded streams, rolling and rushing hill torrents, roaring cataracts, peals of thunder, flashes of lightning, light showers and heavy downpours.

The Guru was interested in worship and war. In his view there was no difference between the two, as both of them led to heaven. Some idea of heavenly life is given in *Ram Avtar*.

Guru Gobind Singh's Works

Title	*Number of Verses*
1. Akal Ustat	271½
2. Bachitra Natak	471
3. Chandi Charitra	
First version	233
Second version	262
4. Chandi di Var	55
5. Chaubis Avtar	1201
6. Fatah Nama	23½
7. Gian Prabodh	336
8. Hikayat	756
9. Jap	199
10. Mir Mahndi	10
11. Pakhian Charitra	7569
12. Rama Avtar including Krishna Avtar	4370
13. Shabad Patshai Das	10
14. Shastar Nam Mala	1323
15. Swayyas	33
16. Zafar Nama	111
17. Miscellaneous	59
Total	17,293[1]

[1]Gursharan Singh, *The Epistle of Victory*, 13.

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The Akal Ustat

It is a collection of many subjects which were composed at different times and then compiled together.[1] God is called Akal Purkh who is both the creator and destroyer. Without his worship there is no salvation.

"Sabh karam phokat jān,
Sabh dharma nihphal mān
Bin ek nām ādhārā
Sabh karam dharma bichara."[2]

Its language is a mixture of Sanskrit, Braj Bhasha, Persian and Arabic. It contains 271½ verses in praise of God, the timeless, formless and all-pervading.

Bachitra Natak

Bachitra Natak is remarkable for the simple reason that it gives an account of battles by the Guru himself who personally participated in them as commander-in-chief. It has 471 verses divided into 14 chapters. It is a combination of mythical, historical and realistic description.

This work is the autobiography of the Guru. It was written at Anandpur in 1692 when Guru was 26 years old. The Guru describes *Bedivansh* of Guru Nanak and his own *Sodhivansh*. He discusses the nine Gurus and sacrifices of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur. He relates his own penance in an earlier life at the snowy mountains of Hemkunt, his present birth and his mission. Its language is old Hindi, with a large number of Sanskrit words. This is the best part of the *Dasam Granth*.

Chandi Charitra

It consists of two works, *Chandi Charitra Ukt Bilas* and *Chandi Charitra Dwitya*. They are based on Markande Purana, and are in Hindi. The exposition is magnificent. The first contains 233 verses in 7 chapters. The second has 262 verses divided into 8 chapters.

Chandi di Var or Var Shri Bhagauti Ji di

It is in Panjabi and contains 55 verses. The story is based on Puranas. The first 25 verses form the invocation to the holy sword.

[1]D.P. Ashta, *Poetry of the Dasam Granth*, 37.
[2]*The Dasam Granth*, 16 .

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The next six verses serve as a background. The rest of the poem describes the thrilling battle scenes. The Chandi or Durga, as an incarnation of Divinity, fought a holy war against cruel demons. She rode on a tiger, brandishing a sword. The tiger roared. She was terrifying to her foes.

In the battlefield he-buffaloes were engaged in fighting. The hissing serpents were attacking the enemy. The sky was overcast first with clouds of dust, then dark clouds appeared. Flashes of lightning were frightening. They were followed by heavy downpour of rain. Earth was trembling under the feet of the fighting heroes. Piercing arrows fell like rain. Wave after wave of warriors came forward, delivered the assault and fell to the rear. They came again after refreshing themselves. Durga was victorious. She is shown as the eternal friend of the weak. Durga is the symbol of dauntless courage, superior moral force, spiritual strength and unbounded enthusiasm. It was a fight between good and evil, and between virtue and vice.[1]

Chaubis Avtars

In this work 24 incarnations of Brahma, Vishnu, Rama, Krishna and Arjan, are described in 1201 verses. These *avtars* fought against evil-doers to protect the good and virtuous people. After their victory God recalled them. Its language is Hindi. A note at the end of the book states that this work was completed in 1755 Bikrami (1698) in the month of Har (June-July) on the banks of river Satluj near the foot of Naina Devi Hill.

Fatah Nama

It is a short letter containing 23½ couplets in Persian addressed to Aurangzeb from Jatpura near Jagraon.

Gian Prabodh

It is in Hindi and contains 336 verses in praise of God, the formless, colourless, casteless, creedless :

Na rangam, na rūpam, na jatam, na pātam[2]

Atma Ram asks Parmatma who is the most marvellous hero with unlimited power and grandeur. Parmatma replies it is Brahma, who is unconditioned, strongest, yet most merciful.

[1]Gursharan Singh, 10-14.
[2]*The Dasam Granth*, 127.

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Hikayat

These stories are almost on the lines of *Pakhyan Charitra* in Persian language. They are eleven in number and cover 28 pages. They are in poetry and contain 756 verses.

The Jap

It contains 199 hymns and verses. *Jap* means worship. It is a morning prayer of the Khalsa, as *Japji* of Guru Nanak is the morning prayer for all the Sikhs, Sahajdharis as well as the Khalsa. The Guru gives about 950 names of God in *Jap*. It is believed that the *Jap* was the first composition of the Guru written at Anandpur about 1684.[1]

God is the Supreme Power. He is most beautiful, bountiful, unborn, changeless and merciful, wielder of arms and present everywhere. "*Jale hai, Thale hai.*" The language is Hindi and Sanskrit. A few Arabic words occur here and there.

Krishna Avtar

It was composed at Paonta in 1688, a little before the battle of Bhangani. It contains heroic and parental sentiments. In verse 10 the Guru says : "Why should He whose form and colour are not known be called black ? You will escape from the net of Death when you cling to His feet."[2]

Mir Mahndi

It deals with the incarnation of Mir Mahndi of the Shia sect.

Pakhian Charitra

In the total number of 17,293 verses in all the Guru's works 7,569 verses or about 44 percent are devoted to women. There was a reason for it. The Guru knew that a man's weakness, according to Persian saying, arises from three sources, *zan*, *zar*, *zamin*, viz., woman, money and land. Among them the strongest attraction is for woman. Thousands of young men in their late teens or early twenties were pouring in Anandpur to recruit themselves in Guru's army.

At this age the sex power is at its height. The Guru wished to check their tendency towards women. He desired to sublimate their

[1]Trilochan Singh, *The Jāp*, 7.

[2]C.H. Loehlin, *The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa Brotherhood*, 45.

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sex impulse into a lofty and exalted channel of *dharma yudh* or holy war which he was then contemplating. He warned his followers of the wiles of women. He ransacked the ancient literature and collected 404 stories on the character and qualities of women. It was written in 1696 at Anandpur. The Guru says : Do not fall into the hands of a woman. Do not become a slave to lust. Do not trust wily women or you will bring your own destruction. Do not fall a victim to strange women. and lose this world and the next. This does not apply to a chaste wife and noble women. The distribution of stories is as follows :

78 stories are devoted to the intelligence, bravery and devotion of women, 269 stories depict wiles and ruses of women, 28 stories discuss man's deceit and cunning in relation to women, 10 stories deal with the folly of drinking, opium-eating and gambling, and 19 stories describe folk tales.

Story no. 176, is about the bravery of a woman. The house of a rich merchant was attacked by a band of robbers. His wife Bir Mati was alone in the house. She picked up a dagger, fought bravely, killed some dacoits and arrested others. Their leader fell at her feet, apologised, and became a good man.

Story no. 364 deals with a wicked woman. When her husband had gone out, she began to enjoy with a paramour. The husband unexpectedly came back. She concealed her lover. While opening the door she broke her necklace and scattered the pearls all around. When the husband got busy in collecting the pearls, she quietly let her lover slip away.

The unscrupulous women will resort to anything including murder, if their designs are frustrated. In that event men will have to face deadliest enemy in such women.

Ram Avtar

It was written in 1698 on the banks of the Satluj. In *Rama Avtar* the Guru tried to make up for wily women in *Pakhian Charitra.* He offered his warriors of *dharma yudh* celestial maidens.

The fighters in the *dharma yudh* or holy war witnessed a wonderful sight. The battlefield was surrounded by thousands of celestial fairies. As the mighty warriors slashed and struck at the enemy, each heavenly maiden was encouraging every individual hero. They possessed most beautiful body, the like of which did not exist on earth. Their face was pink and pretty like lotus. Their eyes resembled those of a

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deer, whose glance pierced into the heart of a holy warrior like an arrow. Their voice was soft and sweet like that of a cuckoo. Their hair was adorned with fragrant flowers. Lips and chin were enchanting. They wore pearl necklaces round their long and thin necks. Their hands were tender like those of a baby and skin shone like moon. Their arms were soft like roses. They wore fascinating rings and bracelets. Their waist was as elegant as that of a tiger. On their feet they had small tinkling bells producing mellow sound. They walked as if they were dancing. Their dress was of superbly scarlet colour. The upper garment was of dazzling loveliness.

Every fairy selected her hero. She said: Revered Sir, I have decided to marry you. I cannot find a warrior braver than you. I will serve you with heart and soul. I cling to your skirt, O Raja. As soon as you lay down your life in *dharma yudh*, you will be in my arms, and I will take you to heaven.[1]

Sbabad Patshahi Das (Verses of the Tenth Sovereign)

These are ten verses. They are a remnant of a bigger collection known as Shabad Hazare or the Thousand Verses.[2] These ten verses insist on the worship of one God only. "Worship none but the Creator, not the creation."[3]

Shastar Nam Mala

It describes various weapons of war. Among these the most important position is assigned to sword.

Aus kripan, khando. kharag, tupak, tabar aur tīr;
Saif, srohi, sehathi, yahi hamāre pīr.

This work contains 1323 verses and covers 91 pages of the *Dasam Granth.*[4]

Swayyas

The Guru dwells on the worship of formless God. The 33 of 4-line-stanzas are recited during the preparation of *Amrit* to be administered at baptism.

"The *yogis* and *sanyasis* and *masands* simply loot people without

[1] *Ram Avtar*, 591-607; C.H. Loehlin, 71, 87.
[2] Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, 359; Loehlin, 44.
[3] Loehlin, 45.
[4] *The Dasam Granth*, 717.

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uplifting them spiritually."[1]

Shri Mukh Vak Patshahi Swayya is a sermon on divinity.

The Zafar Nama

The *Zafar Nama* is in Persian poetry containing 111 verses. It was written at Dina in Malwa in February, 1705. It was composed in the darkest hour of Guru's life. His army was completely wiped out. His wives were scattered in the holocaust on the Sarsa river. His two elder sons were killed in the battle of Chamkaur. His two younger sons were executed at Sarhind. His mother who was with the little children collapsed with the shock. The Guru himself was hiding in exile.

In the *Zafar Nama* Guru chides Aurangzeb for his faithlessness and treachery. He calls the Emperor oath-breaker. He warns him of the consequences of his tyrannous acts.

Adi Granth and the Dasam Granth, a comparison: Similarity

1. Both the Granths have almost the same number of printed pages of the same size of the page and similar type. The *Adi Granth* has 1430 pages and the *Dasam Granth* 1428 pages.
2. Both believe in one Supreme Being, a personal God, merciful and kind.
3. God is also all-pervading, unborn, formless, timeless.
4. Both lay emphasis on meditation and repetition of the Name to achieve salvation.
5. Both believe in the law of karma and transmigration of soul.
6. Both have faith in Sach Khand.
7. Both emphasize on the devotion to the Guru, who is a perfect man, but not god.
8. Both rely on casteless and classless society, and equality between man and woman.
9. Both are in poetry and in Gurmukhi script.

Difference

1. The main difference between the two is that of objective. The *Adi Granth* aims at gaining peace of mind and complete renunciation. The *Dasam Granth* believes in a holy war (*dharma yudh*) against tyranny and fanaticism.
2. God of the *Adi Granth* is God of Truth. God of the *Dasam*

[1]D.P. Ashta, 145.

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Granth is God of Justice, ready to strike at the tyrant, autocrat and the despot.

3. The *Adi Granth* is full of devotion, meditation, grace of Guru and God. The *Dasam Granth* depicts scenes of battles, arms and weapons, and intrigues of women.

4. Guru Nanak's *Japji* and Guru Gobind Singh's *Jāp* differ essentially. *Japji* believes in God's Hukam. There is no such thing in Gobind Singh's *Jāp*.

5. According to Loehlin the *Adi Granth* may be compared to a temple and the *Dasam Granth* to a fortress.[1]

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[1]Loehlin, 57-59.

CHAPTER 19

Eminent Votaries of Sikh Gurus

1. MARDANA, 1459-1520

Mardana was the first disciple and lifelong companion of Guru Nanak and his rebeck player. With all the wit and humour of a Panjabi minstrel, Mardana became a poet and philosopher in the Guru's company. He was a Muslim by birth and a Mirasi or minstrel by caste and rebeck player by profession. Mardana was born at Talwandi Rae Bhoe Ki, the home-town of Guru Nanak, in 1459,[1] ten years before the birth of the Guru. Mardana's parents had lost all their children. When Mardana was born, his mother out of sheer despair and desperation called him *Marjānā*, one who was about to die. But he survived and lived a fairly long life of sixty-one. Guru Nanak changed his name to Mardana meaning brave or manly.

His father was Badra and mother Lakho. Badra was the family bard of Mehta Kalu. Badra and Mardana called every morning at the houses of local residents and obtained alms generally in kind in the form of flour or some eatables. Both would sing to the accompaniment of music on rebeck and on receiving charity would move next door. Nanak as a child listened to their sweet music and felt fascinated. He had a natural attraction for boy Mardana.

In course of time, Nanak left Talwandi and went to Sultanpur Lodi where he was employed in the service of Daulat Khan Lodi, the Governor of the Jalandhar Doab. Mehta Kalu, Nanak's father, was not getting good reports about Nanak's work. It struck him that Mardana's company might do him good. Mardana was thirty years old when he was sent to Sultanpur. Nanak was highly pleased at his arrival. It became usual with both of them to sing songs together in praise of God in the morning and evening before and after office hours, in a public place. Their melodious voice and soft strains on rebeck touched the hearts of listeners and transported them into a state of

[1]Kahan Singh, *Mahan Kosh*, 73.

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bliss. Both lived together and became inseparable. This drama was daily enacted in the streets of Sultanpur for seven long years.

Then Nanak became a missionary, and he decided to move from place to place. Mardana stuck fast to the Guru. Both left for Talwandi. While passing through Muslim villages they stayed in a faqir's *takia* generally situated near a graveyard. There they recited verses in praise of Allah. As Mardana attended prayers in a mosque, Nanak also accompanied him, and some times joined in prayers. The fanaticism of the Mulla or Maulvi was often softened by the presence of Mardana. The Mulla thought that under Mardana's influence Nanak might embrace Islam.

Visiting Sayyidpur and Sialkot on the way, they reached Talwandi. Nanak stayed outside the town, while Mardana called upon his family folk. He had a wife and two sons named Shahzada and Raezada and a daughter. Nanak's parents called on him and tried to persuade him in vain to lead the settled life of a householder. Mardana's wife and children also failed to detain him. In a couple of days both left together for Multan. In due course they returned to Sultanpur Lodi. This took place in 1496.

In 1497 Nanak and Mardana started on a journey to the east. They went as far as Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh and returned through Central India to Panjab in 1509 after twelve years. At Delhi Nanak and Mardana were both imprisoned by Sikandar Lodi for preaching in public in violation of his orders. In jail both sang songs while Mardana played upon rebeck also. This was a fascinating performance, and the prisoners thronged to listen to them. Such a scene was rare in gaol. As this disturbed the normal routine of the place, the Guru and his disciple were set free.

Guru Nanak undertook several journeys. His last journey was made to West Asia from 1517 to 1521. Mardana was with him. From Sultanpur Lodi they went in a boat down the river Beas and Satluj to Panjnad. From there they passed through the country of Sind. In this tedious journey Nanak once rode on horseback. They were halting in a jungle. The horse was let loose to graze and Mardana was looking after it. Nanak suddenly called Mardana to play a particular tune on his rebeck. Mardana would not leave the horse as it was trying to run away. Nanak shouted:

"Let go the horse and come back at once. The word is coming." Mardana quietly obeyed.

At the old harbour of Kot Lakhpat they sailed for Arabia. Having

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visited Mecca and Medina they went to Baghdad in Iraq, the capital of the Caliphs of Islam. As usual they stayed outside the town near a graveyard. Nanak's visit to Baghdad is recorded in the Vars of Bhai Gurdas who wrote:

Bābā gaya Baghdād nun bāhar jai kiyā asthāna,
Ik Bābā akāl rūp dujā rabāb Mardāna.[1]

[Baba went to Baghdad, and put up outside. The immortal Baba was accompanied by the rebeck-player Mardana.]

On the roadside Nanak began to sing hymns in praise of God, and Mardana played a symphonic strain on his musical instrument. The language of the people being Arabic listeners could only catch the names of Allah and Khuda, but the combination of a melodious voice, sweet tune, and saintly appearances produced a soothing effect on their minds. But as music was a taboo in Islam, somebody objected to their performance remarking that music turned mind from God towards sensuality. Nanak could understand and speak some broken Arabic. He replied that God created music, and that He was more easily accessible through pleasing poetry than pale prose.

The pilgrims stayed there for some time. Mardana's health and spirit had been failing, and he felt tired of travelling. To reach home they had to cover a distance of about 5,000 kilometres. If they could walk at the rate of 20 kilometres a day it would take them 9 or 10 months. At this prospect Mardana's heart began to sink. He had realised his life's ambition of making a pilgrimage to the greatest holy places and sacred shrines of Islam at Mecca, Medina and Baghdad. He had won the title of Haji. He did not want to go farther. He felt that he would die at this holy place. As luck would have it, he soon afterwards gave up the ghost in peace and tranquility.

Nanak grew sad. The separation was unbearable. But the Guru had a stout heart and an indomitable will. Besides he had a certain mission in life. With a heavy heart he performed the obsequies of Mardana with his own hands. A humble monument was erected in memory of Mardana. Within an enclosure on a wall an inscription in mixed Turkish and Arabic marks the site. Mardana was called Murad by the residents of Baghdad and being older than Nanak by ten years was considered Guru. Consequently the inscription which was put up after Guru Nanak's departure said:

"Guru Murad died. Baba Nanak *faqir* helped in constructing this

[1] *Var, I,* Pauris 35-36.

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building, which is an act of grace from a virtuous follower, 927 A.H." Mardana seems to have died in December, 1520 A.D. at the age of 61. The monument lies near a graveyard, 2.5 kilometres away from the railway station.

Mardana was a master-rebeck-player. He improved the old form of instrument by fixing 4 to 6 strings to a hollow gourd so as to produce deep and mellow resonance. He sang devotional songs of Kabir, Ravidas, Trilochan, Beni, Dhanna and Nanak. He composed verses also, three of which are included in the *Adi Granth* in Bihagre ki Var. They are against the use of wine which brings about misery, lust, pride, self-conceit, falsehood, ill health and disease. He says:

The barmaid is misery, wine is lust; man is the drinker.

The cup filled with worldly love is wrath, and it is served by pride.

The company is false and covetous, and is ruined by excess of drink.

Instead of such wine make good conduct thy clarified butter, and modesty thy meat to eat.

Such things, O Nanak, are obtained by the Guru's favour; by partaking of them sins depart.[1]

Mardana's last wish to Guru Nanak a little before his death was:

"Only ferry me across this ocean of the world for the sake of the Word of God, which I have been singing to thee and thy people."

On his return to Panjab Guru Nanak called at Talwandi. His parents had died. Mardana's parents also were no more. He condoled with his wife and sons. He persuaded Mardana's eldest son, Shahzada, to accept his father's post, and assured him of equal honour, care and consideration. Shahzada accompanied the Guru to Kartarpur, and served as the chief minstrel to the Guru as well as to the Sikh *sangats*.[2]

2. Budha, 1506-1628

Bhai Budha occupies a unique position in Sikh history. He applied *tilak* of guruship to five Gurus, saw seven Gurus and remained in close association with first six Sikh Gurus from 1521 to 1628 for over one hundred years. He was the first priest of Hari Mandar, and laid the foundations of Dera Baba Nanak and most of the holy buildings at Amritsar. His original name was Buṛa. He was born on October

[1]Macauliffe, I, 182.

[2]Vide Harbans Singh Chawla, *Guru Nanak*, 74-90.

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22, 1506 A.D.[1] His father's name was Sugha Randhawa and mother's Gauran. They lived in Kathu Nangal village of Amritsar District. After some time they settled down in Dhalla village not far away from river Ravi opposite Kartarpur.

In 1524 A.D. Guru Nanak along with Bala was returning to Kartarpur on the western bank of river Ravi where he was living. On the way in the jungle the Guru sat under a tree to take rest. Near-by he saw a boy grazing cattle. The Guru called him, and asked him about his village and parents, etc. Then he told him to go and look after his cattle. The boy enquired if he could do him any service. The Guru said there was nothing to be done by him and he had called him by the way.

Bura found out the name of the village where the holy man lived. Next morning he took a pot full of butter-milk with a lump of butter floating in it to the Guru. He presented his humble gift in all reverence and humility, and listened to the Guru's sermon with care and attention. At the end Bura asked the Guru to tell him the way to attain salvation. Nanak remarked that such a problem did not concern a boy at that young age. As Bura insisted, the Guru remarked that he was young in age but great in wisdom and was not Bura but Burha or Budha, because he talked like an old man. Since then Bura came to be called Bhai Budha. He became a sincere devotee of the Guru, spent a good deal of his time with him, and lived like a hermit.[2]

At Guru's house Bhai Budha served with utmost devotion. He rose early under the light of stars, cleaned the house, polished the hearth with sticky mud, filled the pitchers with water, milked cows and buffaloes, worked in the fields and served in the *langar*. He attended all the sermons of the Guru, and was always at the Guru's beck and call. Whenever Guru Nanak went on a preaching tour in the neighbouring villages, Bhai Budha took care of the Guru's household, and served Mata Sulakhani, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das like a true devotee.

Later on Nanak decided to nominate his successor. He chose Bhai Lahna for this purpose. One day the Guru held a special *langar* and then a durbar. He placed a coconut and five paise before Bhai Lahna, called him Angad and appointed him the next Guru. At the Guru's

[1]*Gurshabad Rutnakar, Mahan Kosh*, 2636.
[2]Daya Ram Akif, *Guru Nanak Devji Maharaj*, 133.

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bidding Bhai Budha applied the *tilak* on Angad's forehead.

On Guru Nanak's death in 1539, Guru Angad left Kartarpur and established his seat at Khadur near river Beas. Bhai Budha lived at Kartarpur. Guru Nanak's elder son, Sri Chand, was not happy at his supersession in favour of Angad. The new Guru did not like to give any offence to Nanak's family. He shut himself up in the house of an old woman named Bhirai at village Sanghar, and told her not to disclose his identity. The Guru spent his time in meditation, and for a year and six months[1] Sikhs could not trace him. They approached Bhai Budha who led them first to Khadur and then to Sanghar. He prevailed upon the Guru to give up seclusion and resume his duties.

Once there were heavy rains in summer. The river Ravi was heavily flooded. It ate away a lot of land. Nanak's tomb situated on the river bank stood in great danger. Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das dug up the brass pitcher containing Guru's ashes. At some distance they decided to bury ashes in a new village. The foundation stone of the first building there was laid by Bhai Budha and the place was called Dera Baba Nanak.[2]

Guru Angad invented Gurmukhi script. In order to popularise it, he started teaching it to the children of the Sikhs. Bhai Budha also learnt it and then took up the Guru's duty to teach it.[3]

At the time of Amar Das's nomination to guruship, it was Bhai Budha who performed the *tilak* ceremony. Guru Amar Das shifted his headquarters from Khadur to Goindwal in order to avoid any conflict over the issue of succession with Guru Angad's sons. Even there the new Guru was not left in peace. Following the example of Guru Angad, he left Goindwal and hid himself up in a hut in the jungle near Basarke village, with instructions that he should not be disturbed. Bhai Budha jumped over the back wall and persuaded the Guru to attend the Sikhs who were regularly calling at Goindwal.

The *tilak* ceremony of the fourth Guru, Ram Das, was also performed by Bhai Budha. Guru Ram Das started digging the tank of Amritsar, and Bhai Budha was made the superintendent of digging operations. It was under his care that the tank was completed.

Bhai Budha applied *tilak* to the fifth Guru, Arjan. He was the youngest son of Guru Ram Das. Arjan's eldest brother Prithia was

[1]Ujagar Singh Sada Anand, *Khalsaji de Panj Hire*, 59.
[2]Mangal Singh, *Baba Budha Sahibji*, 82.
[3]Ibid, 87.

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intensely hostile to Arjan and persecuted him as much as he could. As Guru Arjan had no issue for many years, Prithia proclaimed that the Guru was not destined to have any offspring, and the guruship would eventually come to him. The Guru's wife, Mata Ganga, was cut to the quick at such remarks. She begged the Guru to bless her with a son. He told her to get the blessings of Bhai now Baba Budha. The Baba was then living in the jungle of Basarke village. Mata Ganga waited upon Budha in a grand procession with rich presents of food, sweets and fruits. Budha did not like this show and remained cold. She complained to the Guru. He advised her to go there again like a peasant woman with bread, butter-milk and onions only. The lady was blessed. The sixth Guru Hargobind was her only child.

Guru Arjan appointed Budha tutor of Hargobind. For the compilation of the *Adi Granth* Budha was sent to Mohan to bring the collection of the hymns of the previous Gurus and on its completion he was made the first priest of the Hari Mandar. Having placed the bound copy of the *Holy Granth* on a cot, Baba Budha carried it on his head barefoot to Hari Mandar, followed by Guru Arjan also barefoot with a peacock feathers' fan waving over the sacred scriptures. Bhai Gurdas was third to follow at the head of *sangat*. The first recitation was done by Bhai Gurdas.

Prithia lodged a complaint with Emperor Akbar while on a visit to Panjab that the *Adi Granth* contained objectionable material against Hinduism and Islam. The Guru sent the holy book to the Emperor at Batala under care of Bhai Gurdas and Baba Budha. As no undesirable matter was found therein, the Emperor sent them back with *khilats* and presents. The foundation stone of Santokhsar tank at Amritsar was laid by him.

Baba Budha applied the *tilak* of guruship to Guru Hargobind. The young Guru asked him to adorn him with a sword. Baba Budha had never handled a sword. He put it on the wrong side of the Guru. When the Guru pointed out the mistake, the Baba wanted to remove it to the other side. The Guru did not permit him to undo a holy act. He asked him to tie another sword on the right side. Thus the Guru was adorned with two swords called by him as the symbols of Miri and Piri. After this the Baba laid the foundation stone of Akal Bunga and Akal Takht.

When Guru Hargobind was imprisoned in the Gwalior fort, Mata Ganga sent Baba Budha there to bring the news about the Guru. Budha visited the place 768 kilometres away at the head of many

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Sikhs. The tank of Kaulsar at Amritsar was constructed under Budha's supervision from 1624 to 1627.[1] He passed away in 1628 AD at the age of 122 years. His son Bhana erected Budha's tomb in 1629 at Ramdaspura.[2]

3. MIAN MIR, 1550-1635

Mian Mir was a renowned Sufi saint of Lahore. He belonged to Sistan in Central Asia. His original name was Shaikh Muhammad. He was born about 1550 AD. He had a religious bent of mind. As a child he attentively listened to religious sermons. He became a disciple of Shaikh Khizr of the Qadiri order of Sufis. Sufis believed in spreading Islam by peaceful means. As India was a great field for conversion, Mian Mir decided to come here. He was then about 25 years old. He settled at Lahore. He resided in the suburbs of the city called Begampura. The whole area is now called after him Mian Mir.

Mian Mir was such a holy man of God that the boons granted by him turned into reality. People thronged to him in large numbers from far and wide. Guru Arjan often visited Lahore to see the birth-place of his father and meet his relatives. On the occasion of one of such visits he called on the Pir. The two men of God met and became life-long friends. Mian Mir was thirteen years older than Guru Arjan.

Guru Arjan was responsible for the construction of many tanks and buildings. In 1589 he planned to build a temple in the centre of the holy tank called Amritsar or the tank of nectar. As the temple was to be thrown open to people of all castes, creeds and climes, he invited Mian Mir to lay the foundation stone of the Hari Mandar. He came to Amritsar wearing a religious mendicant's long cloak made up of patches of coarse wool and a cone-cap made of a number of gores with a rose flower on top.

Mian Mir was given one of the warmest welcomes for which Guru Arjan was famous. The two holy men embraced each other in sincere love and regard. The purpose of the temple was disclosed to the Sufi saint. The Guru pointed out that the Hindu temples and Muslim mosques were built on a raised plinth. The Sikh temple would be erected on a lower plinth than the surrounding area. The idea was that God could be attained by bending low in submission and humility. The Hindu temples and Muslim mosques were closed on three

[1]Ujagar Singh, 73.
[2]Mangal Singh, *Jiwan Charitra Baba Budha Sahib Ji.*

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sides and had only one doorway facing east and west respectively. His temple would be open on all the four sides implying that it would welcome persons of all the four castes, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishas and Shudras; to all the four religions in the world, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity, and to all the people from any country or climate from north, south, east and west.

The Muslim saint was highly delighted at the fine objectives the Guru had in mind. He was deeply impressed with his pleasing personality, charming manners and the divine light shining in his face, words and deeds. The foundation-stone was laid. Hymns were sung in the praise of God and sweets were distributed among the audience. A mason with his tools stood by. As the holy man had placed the stone irregularly, the mason corrected its posture in order to place bricks on it properly. The saint expressed sorrow at the mason's mistake and remarked that the temple would have to be rebuilt in course of time. The prophecy came out true about a century and a half later when Ahmad Shah Abdali blew it off with gunpowder.

In 1606 Guru Arjan was implicated in the affair of Khusrau, the rebel son of Jahangir. He was imprisoned in the Lahore fort and was barbarously tortured. When Mian Mir heard about it, he came to see the Guru. He found Guru Arjan calm and serene having completely resigned himself to the will of God. Mian Mir suggested to the Guru whether he should intercede with Emperor Jahangir on his behalf. The Guru forbade him saying that God's will must have its course unchecked, as it was not proper to interfere with its working. He only asked for the Saint's blessings for his son Hargobind.

A couple of years after the death of Guru Arjan, his son and successor Guru Hargobind, a lad of thirteen, called on Mian Mir at Lahore. In the monastery (*Khanqah*) there were many disciples of Mian Mir including a young girl Kaulan. She was the daughter of Rustam Khan, the Qazi of the Capital. Being religious-minded from childhood, she became a disciple of Mian Mir. She had made up her mind to become a nun, but in Islam there was no room for a woman to lead the life of a nun. She therefore decided to become a disciple of Guru Hargobind. Her father grew furious at such a proposal. He tried his best to dissuade her from her intention. Having failed in this attempt he began to persecute her. She fled to Mian Mir who sent her to Amritsar under proper escort. She was given a separate house to live, and she was immortalised by the construction of a tank named after her Kaulsar.

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Jahangir held Mian Mir in high esteem and had a meeting with him. In *Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri* he writes :

"I had heard so much about the sound scholarship, greatness and piety of Shaikh Muhammad Mir Lahori, popularly known as Hazrat Mian Mir, that I had a great urge to see him, but I was at Agra then, and the situation was such that I could not proceed to Lahore. Therefore in the fourteenth year of my reign, 1620, I invited him to Agra. He was kind enough to accept my invitation and came along to oblige me."[1]

The Emperor recorded his impressions of the holy man thus :

"This great man is unique today in his unblemished spiritualism and purity of heart. I go to him often, and he favours me with religious and worldly guidance. I wanted to present some cash but he does not accept it from anybody. I, therefore, did send the prayer-mat made of stag's skin which he very kindly agreed to accept, and then left for Lahore."[2]

Jahangir was so highly impressed with the holy man's discourses that he asked him for any service. The saint replied :

"Then I request you not to disturb me again." Afterwards Jahangir maintained contact with Mian Mir through correspondence.

It seems probable that on this occasion Guru Hargobind was released from Gwalior jail on Mian Mir's recommendation.

Mufti Ghulam Sarwar Lahori in his book *Khazinat-ul-Asafia* says that Jahangir was in Kashmir. Complaints reached him there against Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddis of Delhi, his son Shaikh Nur-ul-Haq and Mirza Hisam-ud-din. The Emperor ordered number 1 and 3 to see him in Kashmir and number 2 to proceed to Kabul. All the three left Delhi in compliance with the royal orders. At Lahore they waited on Mian Mir and sought his blessings. The saint asked them not to proceed farther and wait there. Four days later the news of Jahangir's death reached Lahore. All the three persons returned to Delhi in peace.

On Jahangir's death Nur Jahan declared her son-in-law, Shahiryar as the emperor of India at Lahore. Shahiryar sent a messenger to Mian Mir to seek his blessings and supplicated for the saint's turban as a token of his blessings. The saint put him off. The prince sent another messenger to stay there until the saint parted with his turban. When Mian Mir was pestered with request, he took off his own

[1]Akhlaq Husain Dehlvi, *The Sikh Review*, July, 1980, 46.
[2]Ibid.

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turban and threw it on the ground in a violent manner. Shahiryar was shortly afterwards arrested and blinded by Shah Jahan.

Mulla Abdul Hamid Lahori in his *Badshah Nama* says that Emperor Shah Jahan visited the saint a number of times. The author of *Shah Jahan Nama* states that Shah Jahan waited upon Mian Mir on his way to Kashmir and on his return journey. When Shah Jahan came to Lahore in AH 1028, he went to see Hazrat Mian Mir. As he knew that Mian Mir did not accept any cash, he made the offering of a rosary and a white turban which he accepted and then gave his blessings.[1]

Shah Jahan's daughter Nadira Begam was also a disciple of Mian Mir. At the time of making ablutions she would stand with a pitcher to help the saint in washing his hands, feet and face. When she was eleven, the saint remarked that she should not come into the open now as she was growing into womanhood. The girl felt perplexed. She replied that she would prefer death to her absence from attending upon him. The same night she passed away.

Shah Jahan was very fond of living in Lahore as he was born there. He also had great faith in Muslim saints. Once his eldest son Dara Shikoh, when he was 20 years old, fell seriously ill. The royal physicians failed to cure him. There was almost no hope of life. He was taken to Mian Mir. The Saint held the Prince's hand in his own. He murmured something into a cup of water and blew his breath over it. The prince was made to drink it. He immediately recovered. The Prince went to Mian Mir's monastery barefoot to thank him. The saint held the Prince by hand. Then he unbuttoned his cloak and bared his chest. He held the Prince against his bare body. Holy light at once dawned upon Dara. The saint was chewing cloves. One chewed clove fell on the ground. It was picked up by Dara Shikoh and eaten in all reverence and humility. Abdul Hamid Lahori recorded: "Hazrat Mian Mir is a very good and eminent mystic. He has travelled a lot. He speaks sparsely."

When the saint's end drew near, he fell seriously ill. The famous physician Wazir Khan offered his services. Mian Mir replied he was under the treatment of the Great Physician. A little before his death he instructed his disciples not to sell his bones, meaning they should not accept offerings on his grave.

The saint was deeply loved and revered by all Hindus and Muslims

[1]Ibid. 47.

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alike. He is called the founder of Mian Khail branch of the Qadiri order. He passed away on 11 August, 1635. He was buried at village Hashimpur.[1]

Guru Tegh Bahadur as a child met Mian Mir who blessed him.

4. Gurdas, 1551-1637

As we cannot think of Rama without Hanuman, of Krishna without Arjan, of Buddha without Ananda, of Jesus Christ without St. Paul, so we cannot separate Guru Arjan from Bhai Gurdas. One was the spring, the other was the stream to carry spring waters. Bhai Gurdas remained in close association with third, fourth, fifth and sixth Gurus from 1579 to 1637 for 58 years.

Bhai Gurdas is one of the most eminent personalities in the history of Sikh religion. He was a brilliant scholar and poet and rendered imperishable service to Sikhism. He was so much devoted to his cause that he never married. His humility was so great that though he wrote the *Adi Granth* at the dictation of Guru Arjan, and included therein sayings of many Hindu and Muslim saints, and was the Guru's maternal uncle, yet he declined to include in it his own compositions which were of a high order, for the simple reason that he did not like to raise himself to the position of bhaktas. Guru Amar Das's father was Tej Bhan. Tej Bhan's brother was Chandra Bhan. His son was Ishwar Das. Bhai Gurdas was his son. His mother was Jiwani. Thus Gurdas was a nephew of Guru Amar Das.

He was born in 1551 AD, twelve years after Guru Nanak's death. He was thus the first cousin of Bibi Bhani, daughter of Guru Amar Das, wife of Guru Ram Das and mother of Guru Arjan. His parents belonged to village Basarke, but they migrated to Goindwal, the headquarters of Guru Amar Das. It was here that Gurdas took birth. His parents had embraced Sikh religion. As a child Gurdas attended *sangats* or congregations. He possessed a sweet and melodious voice, and enthusiastically participated in singing hymns. He developed great love and affection for the Gurus' teachings. He picked up Gurmukhi and learnt by heart *Gurbani* or the Gurus' hymns, prayers, and chants. He seldom missed any divine service.

In 1567 Guru Amar Das got a *baoli* or a well with stairs dug up at Goindwal. On the Baisakhi day a great fair was held there which was attended by all the Sikhs. Gurdas as a lad of sixteen served in this

[1]Ibid, 47-48.

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festival and entertained the congregations with his songs and recitations. Guru Amar Das had established twenty-two *manjis* or dioceses each under a *sangatia*. The most important and distant diocese at Agra, then capital of the Mughal Empire in India, was assigned to him. At this time Akbar was the Emperor. Hindi and Sanskrit were flourishing. Goswami Tulsidas had just composed his immortal Ramayana called *Ramcharitmanas*. The most celebrated musician Tansen was living at Akbar's court. Gurdas made the most of his opportunity. He learnt Brajbhasha, Sanskrit and many *ragas* or musical metres after the style of Tansen and composed poetry.

When Guru Ram Das started construction of Amritsar, he recalled Gurdas and employed him to look after the development of the new township by inviting people from the neighbourhood to settle there.

On the nomination of Arjan, Guru Ram Das's eldest son, Prithi Mal, became hostile to his father and brother. His hostility reduced Guru Ram Das to great financial stringency so much so that the Guru's wife, Bibi Bhani, lived on gram flour. This touched Gurdas's heart and he brought back Bhai Budha from the jungle of Basarke to Amritsar to give consolation to the Guru's family.

In 1596 AD, Guru Arjan decided to compile the *Holy Granth*. He deputed Gurdas to many Sikhs to collect *Gurbani*. Then he was sent to Mohan, son of Guru Amar Das, at Goindwal to bring the collection of Guru's hymns from him.

Guru Arjan addressed Bhai Gurdas as '*Māmāji*' or maternal uncle. There being no better scholar than Gurdas among the Sikhs, the Guru entrusted to him the duty of writing the *Granth* at his dictation. Guru Arjan selected a beautiful site two kilometres to the east of the holy tank in the grove of *Beri* (Zizyphus Jajuba) trees on the bank of a pond now called Ramsar. There he put up a small tent. The Guru sat on a cot inside and Bhai Gurdas outside. The dictation continued from sunrise for 4 to 5 hours daily. Gurdas simplified the Gurmukhi style at the bidding of Guru Arjan,[1] and he wrote the *Granth* in the modified script. When the sayings of *bhaktas* had been included in the *Granth*, the Guru asked Bhai Gurdas to insert his own *Vars* and *Kabits* also. *Bhaiji* declined saying that he had not attained that degree of perfection in devotion to God. The *Granth* was completed in 1604 AD.

In 1605 Emperor Akbar on a visit to Lahore stayed at Batala.

[1]Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 16, 23.

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Prithi Mal with the help of local Mughal officials complained to the Emperor against Guru Arjan saying that he had abused Hinduism and Islam therein. The Emperor called for the *Granth*. It was sent under custody of Bhai Budha and Bhai Gurdas. Akbar asked Bhai Gurdas to read at a certain place. At the first place it said:

Khāk nūr karand ālam duniyāi

[God reduces worldly pedagogues to dust.]

The Emperor pointed to a hymn on another page. It stated:

Allāh agam Khudāi bande

[God is eternal and men are his creation.]

Akbar now asked his clerk, Munshi Sarb Dayal, who knew Gurmukhi, to read the *Granth* from another place. It said:

Koi bole Rām Rām koi Khudā

[Some call Him Ram, others Khuda.]

The Emperor was pleased. He made an offering of 51 gold *mohars* to the *Granth*, and awarded robes of honour to its two bearers with another *khilat* for the Guru.

Guru Hargobind became Guru in 1606 AD. The *tilak* of succession was applied by Bhai Budha who adorned the Guru with two swords of Miri and Piri. The *Holy Granth* was recited by Bhai Gurdas. When the Guru was imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior, Mata Ganga, the Guru's mother, sent Bhai Gurdas there to bring news about Hargobind. Afterwards he was sent by the Guru to Afghanistan to purchase horses. On the death of Bhai Budha, the office of the head priest of Hari Mandar was bestowed upon him.

By natural temperament and training Bhai Gurdas was a man of peace. He did not much appreciate Guru Hargobind's militarist activities. He perhaps believed in co-operation with the Mughal Emperors. In a Var he represented people's views about the Guru's activities. He says that they did not approve of his wanderings, wars with Emperors and not devoting full attention to his religious duties. As the Guru was most popular with his Sikhs who were ready to lay down their lives for him voluntarily, Bhai Gurdas concluded his account thus:

"I say the truth which cannot possibly be concealed ; the true Sikhs, like the humble bees, are enamoured of his lotus-feet.

"He supporteth a burden intolerable to others and asserteth not himself."

Bhai Gurdas composed thirty-nine Vars and 556 Kabits. In Vars I and XI he gives a short account of Guru Nanak. In Kabit no. 345 he tells us that Guru Nanak obtained divine light about his mission in

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life on Kartik full moon day:

Kārtik māsi rut sarad puranmāshi
āth jām sāth ghari āj teri bāri hai.

[It is the month of Kartik, weather is cool, full moon day of eight *jams* (24 hours), sixty gharis (24 hours) (is over); it is your turn today (to obtain divine knowledge.)[1]

About mixing people of all castes and creeds in *sangats and pangats* on the basis of social equality Bhai Gurdas has given a fine example. A green betel leaf with a coating of white lime and brown *katha*, when chewed produces a bright red colour giving fragrance to breath and beauty to lips. Similarly the Guru's teachings dissolved all caste differences and produced a homogeneous society of the Sikhs.

Bhai Gurdas further says:

Do good even to bad people like the tree that gives fruit even to those who throw stones at it.[2] Gurdas praises such persons as sacrifice for others and who are happy by serving others.[3]

Bhai Gurdas died in 1637 AD.[4] at the age of 86. He mentions Mardana, Daulat Khan Lodi and others, but there is no reference to Bhai Bala. The house of Bhai Gurdas containing a well and his *smadhi* were situated behind the residence of Guru Hargobind at Amritsar.[5]

5. Bidhi Chand, ?–1638

Bidhi Chand was born in Sursingh village of Lahore district to Vasan Jat. He practised thieving and robbery. Mohsin Fani writes:

"*Bidhia dar awwal duzd būd.*"[6]

[In the beginning Bidhia was a thief.]

One day he lifted many buffaloes and was conveying them through a jungle to his relatives at a distance. Guru Hargobind was also hunting in that jungle. He saw Bidhia driving the cattle hurriedly. The Guru engaged him in a talk and advised him to give up this bad profession. Bidhia declined. The Guru said: "If you cannot abandon stealing, then steal to serve the needy. Do not rob the innocent. Do not steal from a person whose salt you have eaten, nor practise

[1]Gurdas, *Var 9*, Stanza 21.
[2]Ibid, *Var 12*, Stanza 5.
[3]Ibid, 65.
[4]Mani Singh, *Janam Sakhi*, 1-2.
[5]Vide W. H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, 14; Ujagar Singh Sada Anand, *Khalsaji de Panj Hire*, 209-45.
[6]*Dabistan-e-Mazahib*, 239.

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thieving for self-indulgence."

Bidhia offered to become a Sikh if the Guru would not object to his following the profession by subjecting the high Mughal officials and nobles to his nefarious activities. After some time he became an honest disciple of the Guru and began to live with him.

When the Guru was involved in a war with the Mughal Government, he had to leave Amritsar and settled in the northern parts at a place founded by Arjan called Sri Hargobindpur. Some of the vacant land of Bhagwan Das Khatri was also occupied. Bhagwan Das objected to its seizure. The Guru offered him its price. The Khatri declined to part with it. He insulted the Guru. Bidhi Chand gave him four hard slaps on his face. He reeled on the ground and rose no more.

About this time the Guru had sent one of his Sikhs named Sadh to purchase fine horses in Central Asia. Sadh went to Balkh, but found no suitable horses there. From there he went to Iraq and bought three horses of the finest breed. On his return journey he was joined by Mohsin Fani at Kabul where he was waiting for a caravan on its way to India. In those days people could not travel alone. They travelled together from Kabul to Lahore. At Lahore, Khalil Beg, Governor of the place with his son visited the caravan in which the merchandise were open for sale. They were fascinated at the sight of Sadh's horses. They asked their price. Sadh said they were not for sale. The young man forcibly took possession of two horses, while Sadh managed to escape by riding on the third. Mohsin Fani writes:

"Eventually he brought three Iraqi horses. The brutal Khalil Beg saw them and carried them off. The horses did not prove him lucky. Within a year his son who was responsible for that act died, and the Governor himself fell into disgrace and degradation."[1]

Bidhi Chand undertook responsibility to recover these two horses. He went to Lahore and put up with a Sikh named Jiwan. He put on the dress of a grass-cutter and with a spade and a sheet went to the river Ravi, and from its bank he cut green and soft grass. With a load he came to the gate of the Fort and offered his grass for sale. The attendants purchased it for a paltry sum. This grass was so fresh and nutritious that it was served to the two new Iraqi horses seized from Sadh.

Bidhi Chand repeated his performance the following day. He was asked to bring such a fine quality of grass every day. After some time

[1]Ibid.

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he was taken in service of the stable of horses. Bidhi Chand was a strong and sturdy young man. He easily controlled all the horses and looked after two Iraqi horses so well that the head of the stable reposed full confidence in him.

Bidhi Chand adopted a peculiar practice. Concealed in his grass he would bring a big stone. This was thrown in the night over the parapet into the river Ravi flowing below the walls of the fort. The stone produced a loud noise which was considered as the splash of a crocodile. Thereby he was preparing the Fort people to get accustomed to the sound which was to serve him in good stead later on.

Bidhi Chand displayed deep love for the two horses which were named Gulbagh and Dilbagh. In consequence they developed a great attachment to him. One dark night Bidhi Chand took out Gulbagh and rode on it for a while inside the compound. Then he led it to the place from where guns were carried up to the turret. After facing the horse towards the river he applied spurs, and the horse jumped clear into the river. With the help of stars he rode in the direction of Harika-Patan where he reached before dawn. On crossing the river he halted at Daroli village in the house of a Sikh. He spent the night there. The following morning he presented the horse to Guru Hargobind who was staying in village Rupa. Gulbagh grew sad at separation from its companion Dilbagh. It refused to eat anything and tears trickled down its eyes. The Guru asked Bidhi Chand either to bring Dilbagh also or leave Gulbagh back in Lahore.

Bidhi Chand returned to Lahore. This time he stayed in the house of another Sikh. He decided to play the role of a soothsayer. He disguised himself as such and walked into the market-place. Many men and urchins gathered around him. They directed him to the Fort where they said his services could be of any avail. The keeper of horses asked him if he could tell how and where Gulbagh had disappeared.

Bidhi Chand examined the place, visited the stable and caressed Dilbagh who responded by low neighing. Then he sat in meditation. After a time he said he would ride the horse in the compoud to see if it could jump up as high as the fort wall. Just at that very place he kicked the horse and it plunged into the river over it. He made for the Guru and produced it before him at village Kangar in Malwa. The Guru was highly delighted and observed.

Bidhi Chand Chhinā
Guru ka Sinā

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Prem bhagat linā
Kade kami nā

Bidhi Chand spent his life in the service of Guru Hargobind. He passed away at Devnagar village 50 kilometres from Ayodhya on the bank of river Gomti in September, 1638 AD.[1] Bidhi Chand was a great warrior, and rendered meritorious services to the Guru in his wars against the Mughals. He deserves the rank of being the first Sikh musketeer of a high order. He occupies a permanent place among Sikh heroes for his boldness, bravery and dare-devilry. Dr Trilochan Singh rightly calls him the Robin Hood of Majha.[2]

6. MATIDAS, ?-1675

Bhai Mati Das was a Mohyal Brahman of village Kariala in Jehlam district, about 10 kilometres from Chakwal on the road to Katas Raj. The village stands on the top of Surla hills. This part of the country is known as Dhani meaning rich. A few kilometres away are the Salt Mines and coal mines of Dandot. The Katas lake is beautiful. A great Hindu fair was held there upto 1947. The Hindus always selected fine places of enchanting natural beauty for their fairs, festivals and pilgrimages. The inhabitants upto 1947 were both Hindu and Muslim, all handsome, tall, robust, and strong, enjoying a good standard of living.[3]

Mati Das was the son of Hira Nand a devotee of Guru Hargobind under whom he had fought in many battles. He survived the Guru, and a little before his death he had entrusted his two sons, Mati Das and Sati Das to the care of Guru Har Rae, who had assured the dying man of his full attention and help. Both the lads remained attached to the Guru's family at Kiratpur. When Har Krishan was summoned to Delhi by Aurangzeb, both the brothers, Mati Das and Sati Das, were present in his entourage alongwith Dayal Das, Gurditta, a descendant of Bhai Budha.

On Guru Har Krishan's death at Delhi, these two brothers were included in the deputation of five men containing Dayal Das and Gurditta also to declare the nomination of Tegh Bahadur as the ninth Guru at Bakala where the new Guru was then residing. The Guru was pleased to offer the two important portfolios of finance and home de-

[1]Ujagar Singh Sada Anand, 79-124; Macauliffe, IV, 226.
[2]Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 2.
[3]Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Sikh Martyrs*, 57-58.

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partments to Mati Das and Sati Das respectively. Both knew Persian well, and were quite familiar with the working of the Guru's durbar. The department of household affairs was entrusted to Dayal Das.

The two brothers accompanied Guru Tegh Bahadur during his journey to Assam. They were present at the foundation of Anandpur by Guru Tegh Bahadur on his return to Panjab. The Guru's council of administration then consisted of Mati Das, Sati Das, Dayal Das and Gurditta. When the Guru was carried to Delhi, these four persons followed the Guru.

At Delhi the Guru and his four companions were summoned into the council chamber of the Red Fort. The Guru was asked numerous questions on religion, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. It was suggested that the Guru should embrace Islam, and he was offered many temptations. Several newly converted Hindus were produced before the Guru to tell him how happy they were in Islam. On Guru's emphatic refusal to abjure his faith, he was asked why he was called Tegh Bahadur or gladiator. Bhai Mati Das immediately replied that the Guru had won the title by inflicting a heavy blow on the imperial forces at the young age of fourteen. He was reprimanded for his breach of etiquette and outspokenness. As Mati Das was a Brahman, the Guru was asked why he had courted the company of such men when he did not believe in caste, and why he was defending the Brahmans of Kashmir. The Guru replied that when a person became a Sikh, he lost his caste. As for the Kashmiri Pandits, it was his duty to raise his voice against cruelty and injustice. The Guru and his companions were ordered to be imprisoned and tortured until they agreed to embrace Islam.

After a few days Guru Tegh Bahadur and three of his companions were produced before the Qazi of the city. Gurditta had managed to escape. He remained in hiding in the city, and in spite of all the efforts of the Government, he could not be traced. The Qazi first of all turned to Mati Das and asked him to embrace Islam. He replied that Sikhism was true and Islam was false, and he would not renounce virtue for vice. If God had created only Islam, all men would have been born circumcised, he said. He was condemned to instantaneous death.

The executioners were called and the Guru and all the three of his companions were made to sit at the place of execution. Bhāi Mati-Das approached the Guru with folded hands and asked for his blessings, saying that he was happy to be the first to achieve martyrdom.

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The Guru blessed him telling that they must resign themselves cheerfully to the will of the Lord. He praised him for his lifelong single-minded devotion to him and his cause. With tears in his eyes he bade him farewell saying his sacrifice would occupy an abiding place in history. Mati Das touched the Guru's feet, embraced his friend and brother, and came to his place.

Mati Das while standing erect was tied between two posts. Two executioners placed a double-handed saw on his head. Mati Das serenely uttered "Ik Om" and started repeating the Japji.[1] He was sawn across from head to loins.[2] Dayal Das abused the Emperor and his courtiers for this infernal act. He was tied up like a round bundle and thrown into a huge cauldron of boiling oil. He was roasted alive into a block of charcoal. Sati Das condemned these brutalities. He was hacked to pieces limb by limb. The Guru witnessed this savagery with divine coolness. The world history does not offer anything worse than this *halāl* butchery of human beings.[3]

7. Budhu Shah, 1641-1705

Sayyid Budhu Shah was a Muslim saint of Sadhaura in Ambala district lying on the road from Chandigarh to Jagadhari and from Barara railway station to Nahan, 55 kilometres to the east of Ambala city, at the foot of the Shivalik hills on the banks of Nakti Nadi. His piety and holiness had attracted the attention of all the people in the region both Hindu and Muslim.

Pir Budhu Shah's original name was Sayyid Badr-ud-din. He was born on June 13, 1641, in a rich Sayyid family of Sadhaura. From his childhood he was imbued with spiritualism and realization of God. As he took no interest in worldly affairs and spoke little, he was called Budhu or stupid. Being a Sayyid, Shah was added to his name. When he grew up to manhood, people considered him a man of God, and designated him Pir or a saint. The epithet of Budhu Shah stuck to him. He became Pir Budhu Shah. At the age of 18 Budhu Shah was married to Nasiran, younger sister of General Saeed Beg of Bhareli in Ambala district. He had four sons by her: Muhammad Ashraf, Muhammad Bakhsh, Muhammad Shah and Shah Husain.

Most of the Muslims had rejoiced at the fanaticism of Aurangzeb and at the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Pir Budhu Shah was of a different mould. His soul was tormented at the Emperor's wrong

[1] Raja Sir Daljit Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 155.

[2] This place in Chandni Chauk was named in 1970 as Chauk Mati Das.

[3] Trilochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, 100, 112, 138, 193, 305, 312.

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policy, and his mind was tortured at this wrong deed. When Guru Gobind Singh began to live at Paonta in Sirmaur State, only 16 kilometres to the north. Budhu Shah decided to call on him and offer him his sincerest condolences. At the head of a few disciples he visited Paonta. After expressing his sorrow, grief and sympathy he wanted to know how far the young Guru had attained divine light. In the course of conversation the Pir asked how man could meet God. The Guru replied as night met day. The Pir remarked that night then disappeared. The Guru observed that in the same manner when truth dawned falsehood vanished. The barrier of self stood between man and God. By discarding love of self, family, wealth, power, prestige and fame, one would meet God. The Pir said that the ego could not be curbed easily. The Guru suggested that a person must resign himself completely to the will of God. By doing so he would attain divine light. Budhu Shah praised the young Guru.

Shortly after his arrival at Paonta, the Guru began to reorganise his forces. Young men of dash and daring were flocking to him from the plains below. Five Pathan leaders of village Damla in Tahsil Jagadhari not far from Paonta had their own contingents of troops, each roughly consisting of one hundred men. They were professional soldiers and offered their services to anyone who could pay them. They were all disciples of Pir Budhu Shah. As they were unemployed, they approached the Pir to recommend them to Guru Gobind Singh for service. The Pir accompanied them to Paonta. They were immediately employed on daily wages. Each *sardar* was paid five rupees and a soldier one rupee.

A few months later acute differences arose between the Guru and the hill rajas led by Fatah Shah of Garhwal. The real person who was responsible for this act was Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur (Bilaspur). He was a bitter opponent of the Guru. He had already fought a couple of engagements with him and had been repulsed. In October, 1688, he had come in the Dun region to marry his son to the daughter of Raja Fatah Shah of Garhwal. On this occasion several other hill rajas were also present with their contingents. They all decided to fight the Guru and break his power, because he believed in casteless society, and had declared Shudras equal to Rajputs.

They knew that the Guru's Sikhs were raw young men, and the only trained soldiers were the five hundred Pathans in his service. They were offered higher pay and rewards and were to be allowed to plunder Guru's camp and capital in case of his defeat. A few days

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before the actual attack they deserted the Guru and went over to the hill rajas.

The Guru was upset at this sudden desertion and treachery. A man was sent to Pir Budhu Shah who was very much disappointed at the conduct of the Pathans whom he had recommended. He invited his disciples to meet him, and in a short space of time as many as 700 young men gathered at Sadhaura. They were placed under command of his two sons and two brothers in order to avoid any defection. They marched to Paonta under Pir Budhu Shah and offered their services to the Guru. The Pir's sons and brothers were designated as Risaldars, and each of them was paid Rs. 150/- per mensem while every soldier received Rs. 30/-.

The enemy crossed the Yamuna a little above Paonta. The Guru immediately hurried to intercept them. Both the parties took up position in the valley of Bhangani, 10 kilometres to the north-east of Paonta. A fierce battle was fought on the bank of Giri, a tributary of the Yamuna. Budhu Shah's men fought desperately. But as bad luck would have it, the Pir's two sons named Sayyid Muhammad Ashraf and Sayyid Muhammad Shah, Pir's brother Bhure Shah and many followers lost their lives. Pir Budhu Shah's timely help was mainly responsible for the Guru's victory. The Guru won the battle, but he was grieved at the Pir's heavy loss. The Guru expressed his deepest gratitude to Pir Budhu Shah for his singular contribution at the most critical juncture. He blessed the Pir, gave him many presents and conferred a robe of honour on Budhu Shah.

Budhu Shah bore the shock with fortitude; but he was sure it would break the heart of his wife Nasiran. The Guru had made up his mind not to continue any longer at Paonta, but he could have left the place at ease. In view of Nasiran's state of mind, the Guru wished to accompany Budhu Shah in order to console the old lady. In consequence he raised his camp in the greatest hurry and reached Sadhaura. He did his utmost to alleviate the grief of Nasiran, and told her it was the will of God.

Pir Budhu Shah's brother-in-law was Saeed Beg. He was an officer in the Mughal army. In 1702 a contingent of Mughal troops under command of Alif Khan was going from Lahore to Delhi. Saeed Beg was his deputy. At Sarhind they were met by Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur. He persuaded Alif Khan to help him in expelling Guru Gobind Singh from Anandpur on a payment of one thousand rupees daily. Alif Khan had already fought in the Kangra hills, and had a grievance

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against the Guru. Saeed Beg was not in favour of attacking the Guru whom he considered a saint. He told Alif Khan that the hill rajas were opposed to him because they were all idol-worshippers, while the Guru was against idol-worship. Alif Khan did not agree and marched upon Anandpur. After a couple of skirmishes Saeed Beg deserted Alif Khan and went over to the Guru. Alif Khan thereupon retired in disgust. Saeed Beg remained loyal to the Guru, and laid down his life in another engagement fighting against the Mughal forces.

No notice was taken of the battle of Bhangani and Pir Budhu Shah's participation in it at the time. It was a battle between the *kafirs*. The loss of Muslims on the battlefield was also ignored as they were the followers of a Sufi saint who were also in bad books of the emperor.

Pir Budhu Shah's case cropped up 16 years later. On Guru Gobind Singh's escape from Chamkaur every attempt was made by Wazir Khan, the governor of Sarhind, to capture the Guru alive or dead. Having failed in his attempts, the governor's wrath fell on the Pir as Sadhaura lay under his jurisdiction. Wazir Khan ordered Usman Khan, the Darogha of Sadhaura, to destroy the Pir and his family. They were all killed in cold blood on 21 March, 1705. Later on the Pir's tomb became a place of pilgrimage for Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike.[1]

Pir Budhu Shah set up a noble example of being free from religious bigotry and prejudices and of his co-operation in the right cause. His descendants enjoyed a holy status in the area upto 1947 when they left for Pakistan.[2]

8. Nand Lal, 1633-1715

Nand Lal, a great scholar of Persian, was one of the fifty-two poets of Guru Gobind Singh. He was born at Ghazni in Afghanistan in 1633 AD and was thus twenty-three years older than the Guru. His father was Diwan Chhajju Ram, Mir Munshi or chief secretary of the Governor of Ghazni.

Nand Lal was an intelligent child, and in a short time acquired great efficiency in Persian and Arabic. He had a natural aptitude for poetry and began composing verses in Persian even at the young age of twelve under the penname Goya He lost his mother at the age of 17, and father when he was 19. Finding no suitable opening for his

[1]Gurcharan Singh and Suri, *Pir Budhu Shah*, 13, 15.

[2]Ranbir Singh, *Glimpses of the Divine Master*, 238-39; Sat Pal Nancy Singh, 'Pir Budhu Shah and his Supreme Sacrifice', *The Sikh Review*, August, 1979. 35-37.

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talents in Ghazni, Nand Lal decided to migrate to India. Having sold his ancestral property he journeyed along with his two brothers and two Pathan servants through Kandhar and Bolan Pass and settled down at Multan. He bought a house and took a local Sikh girl as wife. The Nawab offered him a job and soon appointed him Mir Munshi. He was sent on an expedition against a notorious dacoit Sahu who was captured and 700 of his followers were slain.

Multan, "the abode of dust, heat, beggars and graveyards,"[1] as a popular proverb says, appeared a poor substitute for Ghazni, a lovely place at a height of 7,000 ft. He did not like the place and migrated to Delhi. He came to the notice of Prince Muazzam, later on Emperor Bahadur Shah, who took Nand Lal in his service. Once the King of Iran sent a letter to Aurangzeb. The Emperor asked his nobles including his eldest son, Prince Muazzam, to prepare the draft of its reply. The Prince's draft written by Nand Lal was considered the best and was despatched. On another[2] occasion a discussion arose in the court of Aurangzeb about the meaning and interpretation of a certain verse in the *Holy Quran*. The Muslim theologians failed to satisfy the Emperor. Prince Muazzam was also there. He talked about this matter to Nand Lal who immediately gave its version. The Prince conveyed it to the Emperor who was highly delighted. He inquired who had given that definition. On hearing the name of a Hindu he felt upset, because he did not like a *Kafir's* mastery over the sacred text. He suggested that such a man of learning should be persuaded to embrace Islam. In a public durbar he was awarded a robe of honour and a cash prize of Rs. 500.[3]

When Prince Muazzam was imprisoned by Aurangzeb in 1686, Nand Lal lost his job. Aurangzeb wanted to retain Nand Lal in his court after converting him to Islam. On his persistent refusal, it was feared that he would be put to death. Nand Lal left for Northern India. At his departure he composed the following couplet :

Dil-e-zālim ba qasad-e-Kushtan-e-Ma ast,
Dil-e-mazlum-e-ma-ba-su-e-Khuda ast.

Nand Lal's wife belonged to a Sikh family of Multan. She daily recited *Gurbani* and knew Gurmukhi. As Nand Lal also had a religious

[1]Kahan Singh, *Mahan Kosh*, 723.
[2]Macauliffe, V, 103.
[3]Ranbir Singh, op. cit., 257-58; Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, *Shri Guru Dashmesh Prakash*, 151.

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bent of mind, he sang the Gurus' hymns and picked up Gurmukhi. In those days Guru Gobind Singh's name was on the lips of everybody in Northern India. He made up his mind to wait on him. Leaving his family at Multan, he made for Anandpur alone. It happened about the beginning of 1689.

Nand Lal lived in a small house, and did not call on the Guru. He thought if his poetry was of any worth, the invitation must come from the Guru. He composed a poem in Persian and sent it to the Guru. He said:

How long shall I patiently wait?
My heart is restless for a vision of thee.
My tearful eyes, says Goya,
Have become flooded with streams of love,
Flowing in a passionate affection towards thee.

The Guru kept silent. He expected that the writer would present himself at his durbar of his own will.

A few days later Nand Lal composed another poem to the same effect and sent it to Gobind Das.

My heart burns in separation of the beloved,
My soul is aflame with a passion for him,
I am so much enveloped in these flaming emotions,
That whoever sees me in this plight
Burns like pinewood that catches fire.
I am not the only one burning in these flames,
The whole world around me is ablaze.
I am burning on the embers of separation,
Just as a chemist burns chemicals on a furnace.
Blessed be thou O heart of Goya,
For being burnt in passionate flames of love.

The Guru invited Nand Lal to meet him. Gobind Das, 23 years old, possessed a dazzling personality. He was sitting in a durbar. At first sight Nand Lal was struck at the splendour and grandeur of the court and at the radiance of the Guru's face. He spontaneously addressed the Guru thus:

O, The prince of heaven ! The king of the beautifuls ! Pray do not become more beautiful. I have no more strength left in me. Allured, charmed and fascinated by thee, I sacrifice myself unto thee !

Glory, glory, O beloved!

He was offered a seat. Nand Lal immediately composed a poem on the spot and said.

My life and faith are held in bondage,
By your sweet and angelic face ;
The glory of heaven and earth,
Is hardly worth
A hair of your golden locks.
O, how I can bear the light,
Shed by the piercing glance of your love,
To ennoble and enlighten life,
A glimpse of the beloved is enough.

Guru Gobind Das gently smiled and gave him a penetrating glance. Nand Lal at once said:

From the beautiful bow of your eye-brow
You shot the arrow of your glance;
The arrow of love is through my heart,
There is no cure, no remedy,
The eyes that are half closed with joy
Caught from the beam of the face,
Look not at anything else.
If in their way, a thousand thrones wait for them.
The joy-sealed eyes have no time to cast
Even a passing glance on the jewelled crowns.[1]

Nand Lal was admitted to the court as the topmost poet. One day Nand Lal presented the Guru with a collection of his poems entitled *Bandgi Nama* (The Book of Homage). The Guru replied in the following Persian verse changing its name from *Bandgi Nama* to *Zindgi Nama* (The Book of Life) :

Āb-e-haivān pur shud Chun jām-e-o,
Zindgi Nāma shud Bandgi Nāma-e-o[2]
[When his goblet was filled with the water of life,
His *Bandgi Nama* became *Zindgi Nama.*]

On another occasion Nand Lal said :

Mā rā bayak ishara-e-abru Shahid kard,
Aknun ilāj nest kih tir az kaman guzasht.
[I was made a martyr by one gesture of your eyebrow;
There is no remedy now as the arrow has left the bow.]

At another place he observed:

Zahe sahib dile raushan zamire ārif-e-kāmil.

[1]Ranbir Singh, 253-56.
[2]ibid, 259; Kalaswalia, 153.

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Kih bar dargāh-e-Haq peshāni-e-o daima me bāshad.
[Behold the lord of the heart, enlightened in mind, perfect holy man.
Whose forehead is always at the door of God.]
Nand Lal calls the Guru king:
Mā bapā-e-Shāh sar afganah em,
Az do ālam dast rā afshāndah em
[I have placed my head at the feet of the King,
I have given up both the worlds.]

Guru Gobind Singh was involved in several battles against the hill rajas and the Mughal governors of Jammu, Lahore and Sarhind. Besides the hill rajas also revolted against the Mughal government. When the Panjab officials had failed to suppress them, Emperor Aurangzeb ordered his son Muazzam to chastise the rajas and the Guru. The hill rajas fled into the high mountains. Their territory was looted and destroyed. In the campaign which took place in 1698 AD. the Guru was left unmolested mainly due to the pleading of Bhai Nand Lal. He assured the Prince that the Guru was a mere saint, and he had nothing to do with the revolt of the rajas. He was also convinced that the Guru could be of great help to the Prince in his struggle for the throne. About the Prince the Guru writes in *Bachitra Natak*:

"He had demolished the houses of disloyal persons to the Guru.
God himself saved all his true followers.
Not a hair of them was touched."[1]

At Anandpur there were several free community messes for the poor and needy. One day all the nobles began to praise their own free kitchens. Guru Gobind Singh in disguise of a rustic called at every-one of them, and he found only Nand Lal's *langar* working properly.

In 1700 AD, Holi was celebrated on a grand scale by Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur. On this occasion Nand Lal composed a poem in Persian in which he said :

Holi has made lips beautiful like a flower bud. Rose water, amber, musk and saffron water fell like rain on all sides. Chūn bārān bārishe az sū basū kard). The scattering of *gulal* by the Guru turned every-thing red. (*Zàmin-o-āsmān rā surkhrū kard*). The pistons filled with saffron-coloured water imparted lovely tinge to the uncoloured. When my king put on the coloured neck cloth, both the worlds became happy through his kindness.

[1]*Bachitra Natak*, Sec. xiii, Chaupais 9-20.

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Do ālam gasht rangin az tufailash.
Chūn Shāham jama rangin dar gulo kard.[1]

Nand Lal was with the Guru up to December 1704. The Guru's family was separated from him in the battle of Sarsa river. The Guru's 80-year-old mother with her two youngest grandsons went with their cook. The Guru's two wives, Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi remained with Bhai Mani Singh. Nand Lal soon joined them. He had lived at Delhi earlier for several years, and had contacts with influential, liberal-minded nobles at the court. It appears probable that the two ladies went to Delhi under Nand Lal's guidance, otherwise they would not have gone to the imperial capital. Nand Lal must have thought that the ladies' safety and security could be assured there against Wazir Khan's wrath. His jurisdiction extended up to the borders of Panipat.

After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, Nand Lal was the intermediary between Emperor Bahadur Shah and the Guru. Nand Lal was in Bahadur Shah's camp from 1707 to 1712.

Amar Namah composed in October, 1708, at Nander in line 42, says that Bhai Nand Lal was present in Bahadur Shah's camp at Nander as one of his secretaries.[2]

Nand Lal was present in the Emperor's Lohgarh campaign against Banda Bahadur in 1710. He accompanied the Emperor to Lahore. On Bahadur Shah's death at Lahore in 1712, he joined Bahadur Shah's son and successor Jahandar Shah and came to Delhi. In 1713 Jahandar Shah was defeated and killed by Farrukh Siyar.

Farukh Siyar displayed in the streets of Delhi Jahandar Shah's headless body tied on the bare back of an elephant and his head fastened to its tail. He then searched for late emperor's faithful supporters and servants. Nand Lal escaped from Delhi and went to Multan. There he opened a school to impart higher education in Persian and Arabic. He died in 1715. In 1849 at Panjab's annexation the British found this school functioning under the patronage of Nand Lal's descendants. He had two sons Lakhpat Rae and Lila Ram.[3]

Nand Lal wrote 10 works, 7 in Persian, 2 in Panjabi and 1 in Hindi. All of them were composed at Anandpur. He adopted two nom de

[1]Sundari and Rana Surat Singh *Karta, Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, 225-26, 963-65.
[2]Ganda Singh, *The Sikh Review*, January, 1972, 11.
[3]Ujagar Singh Sada Anand, 163; Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 99-101, 122.

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plumes, Goya and Lal. The following are his compositions :

1. *Zindgi Nama.* The author called it *Bandgi Nama.* Guru Gobind Singh changed its title to *Zindgi Nama.* Its theme is love of God and devotion to the Guru. It contains 519 verses.

2. *Diwan-e-Goya.* It is a collection of 63 ghazals 18 quatrains and 126 *bayāts.*

3. *Tausif-o-Sana.* It is in prose, but contains a few verses at the end. It is in praise of Guru Gobind Singh. This work is full of Arabic and difficult Persian words.

4. *Ganj Nama.* It is a panegyrical discourse on all the ten Sikh Gurus individually. It is both in prose and poetry. It is saturated with the author's love for Guru Gobind Singh.

5. *Jot Bikas.* It is in Hindi. It contains 43 couplets. It is mainly devoted to explain Guru Arjan's Jaitsri ki Var, with special reference to the ten Gurus being only one spirit and one light. It is also loving exposition of Guru Gobind Singh's personality.

6. *Jot Bikas.* It is in Persian. It is an exposition of 43 Hindi couplets into 179 Persian couplets.

7. *Rahit Nama.* It was written in Panjabi in December, 1695, on the banks of river Satluj at Anandpur. It is a code of conduct for the pre-Khalsa Sikhs.

8. *Tankhah Nama.* It was composed in Panjabi after the creation of the Khalsa. It contains frequent references to Guru Gobind Singh and his Khalsa, and serves as a code of discipline for the Khalsa.

9. *Dastur-ul-Insha.* It is a collection of letters in Persian prose to his relatives and friends. They serve as a model of letter writing and contain valuable historical information regarding political, social and economic conditions of Guru Gobind Singh's time.

10. *Arz-ul-Alfaz.* It is in Persian poetry, and contains praise of God and Sikh Gurus and religious philosophy.[1] He gives his own interpretation of Sikh doctrines.

Comment

Nand Lal's poetry is fresh, soft, sweet and inspiring. It is free from ambiguity and artifices. It is rich in imagery, lucid in perception and penetrating to the heart. His frankness, truthfulness and sincerity leave a lasting impression on the mind of the reader. His sharp intelligence and keen intellect are visible everywhere in his verses. Nand

[1]ibid, 10-30; Mahan Singh, 20-25.

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Lal's works are fine commentaries on Guru's teachings and Sikh way of life. His *Rahit Nama* is a dialogue between Guru Gobind Singh and himself, concerning rules of conduct for Khalsa.

Nand Lal's poetry flows like life. There is majesty in thought and emotions which rise and soar like a flood, with complete surrender to the Guru, and then happiness will flow like a spring water.

9. Bhai Mani Singh

Dayal Das was the eldest brother of Bhai Mani Singh. He was one of the five companions of Guru Tegh Bahadur before his execution at Delhi. First of all Bhai Mati Das was asked to become a Musalman. He boldly pleaded for his own religion as being the best. He was at once tied between two posts, and while standing erect was sawn across from head to loins. Dayal Das condemned the Emperor and his courtiers for this inhuman act. He was immediately tied up like a bundle, thrown into a huge cauldron of boiling oil and roasted alive into a block of charcoal.

Mani Singh was born nearly three years before Dayal Das's martyrdom in the beginning of February, 1673, on Wednesday. His father was Kala Dullat and Mother Daya Kaur. They lived at village Longowal near Kangar in Malwa. Some writers are of the opinion that Mani Singh was born in Akoi village not far from Longowal. When Guru Tegh Bahadur was touring in Malwa, Kala waited on him with his two younger sons, Nigahia and Mani Ram.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution took place in November, 1675. In 1682 Kala called at Anandpur to pay homage to Guru Gobind Singh. Both of his sons were with him. Mani Ram was then nine years of age. Nigahia was older. Mani Ram had such a fascination for the place, the Guru and *sangat* that he declined to return home.

Mani Ram spent his time in singing hymns, in serving *sangats*, in learning Gurmukhi and in memorising *Gurbani*. In 1699 AD on the occasion of creation of the Khalsa, after the Five Beloved Ones, Mani Ram received baptism from Guru Gobind Singh and became Mani Singh. According to Dr. Trilochan Singh, Bhai Mani Singh was married to Sito Bai, daughter of Lakhi Rae Yadav of Muzaffargarh district.

At the time of evacuation of Anandpur by Guru Gobind Singh in December, 1704, Mani Singh followed the Guru. When on the bank

[1]Guru Tegh Bahadur, 100.

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of river Sarsa the Guru was suddenly attacked at night by the Mughal forces, all were scattered in different sides. The Guru's mother and his two youngest sons went in one direction. The Guru's wives, Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi, followed another route. Mani Singh immediately joined the ladies. He led them along the bank to a distance. In a village he changed their clothes into those of a peasant woman. He also acquired ordinary ponies with pack saddles. Thus disguised he led them across the river the following day when the flood water had subsided. He guided them on to Ambala. His aim was to take them to Nahan, the capital of the friendly Raja in whose territory the Guru spent three years at Paonta. But the numerous streams were flooded on account of heavy rains. Under advice of Nand Lal, who also accompanied the ladies, it was decided to go to Delhi outside Wazir Khan's jurisdiction. There posing themselves as Muslims they stayed in Matya Mahal, a purely Muslim locality even upto now, out of sheer necessity for security. When Mani Singh knew that the Guru was living at Talwandi Sabo now called Damdma Sahib, he conducted the Guru's wives there.

The *Adi Granth* was in possession of Dhir Mal, a grandson of Guru Hargobind who lived at Kartarpur near Jalandhar. Guru Tegh Bahadur's disciples had seized the *Granth* by force without the knowledge of the Guru, who returned it to Dhir Mal. Guru Gobind Singh sent Mani Singh to Kartarpur to borrow the *Granth*, and in case of refusal to copy it. Dhir Mal declined to part with it, or to be copied. He tauntingly said if Gobind Singh were a true Guru, he should be able to reproduce it. This challenge touched the Guru's heart, and he set himself to this task in right earnest. It is said that he dictated the whole *Granth* to Bhai Mani Singh from memory including 116 hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur, and one of his own.

Afterwards the Guru dictated to Bhai Mani Singh his *Jap*, *Bachitra Natak* or his own autobiography, *Akal Ustat* or praise of God, *Chandi Ki Var* or the praise of Durga, the goddess of war, *Gian Prabodh* or the awakening of knowledge, *Chaubis Avtars* or twenty-four warlike incarnations of God, *Swayyas* or religious hymns in praise of God, *Shastar Nam Mala* or a description of weapons of war both offensive and defensive, *Triya Charitar* or character of women, and *Zafar Nama* or the Epistle of Victory addressed to Aurangzeb. All these works were later on arranged by Mani Singh in one volume. Collectively they formed the *Dasam Granth*.

Having spent a little over nine months at Damdama Sahib, the

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Guru decided to leave for the Deccan to see Aurangzeb. He sent his wives back to Delhi under the charge of Bhai Mani Singh. When Guru Gobind Singh had advanced into Rajasthan as far as Baghaur, he learnt that the Emperor was no more. He turned towards Delhi. He joined the new Emperor, Bahadur Shah, at Agra in July, 1707. Mata Sundari was left in Delhi, while Mata Sahib Devi accompanied him. Bhai Mani Singh remained in attendance upon the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh passed away at Nander on October 7, 1708. Bhai Mani Singh was present there. He escorted Mata Sahib Devi back to Delhi where she lived with Mata Sundari for the rest of her life.

Mani Singh took leave of the ladies and came to Amritsar to look after the holy places, and to convey to them the offerings received at Hari Mandar for their maintenance. At that time Banda Bahadur was conquering Panjab. A rift soon took place among the Sikhs. A group who considered themselves as the real Khalsa for they had been baptised either by Guru Gobind Singh himself or by his baptised persons, called themselves Tatva Khalsa. The other group directly recruited by Banda in his army were designated Bandai Sikhs. A conflict arose over the possession of the holy places of Amritsar. Bhai Mani Singh was then in charge of Hari Mandar. He decided the case in a simple way. On two pieces of paper he wrote the words Tatv Khalsa and Bandai Khalsa. The papers were rolled up into a ball and thrown into the holy tank at Har ki Pauri. The paper bearing the name of Tatv Khalsa came up the water first, and the holy places were immediately handed over to them.

In 1721 it struck Bhai Mani Singh that the *Adi Granth* based upon *rāgas* created confusion. He thought that its rearrangement into separate chapters of every Guru and bhakta would be easier for the common man to read and understand. Consequently he took up this work and after years' hard labour reorganised it. The *sangats* grew furious. The Bhai was condemned for tampering with the sacred scriptures in such a brutal way. He was cursed that his body should be cut to pieces as he had mutilated the *Holy Granth*. The condemnation by the *sangats* came out to be true.

The Mughal Government of Lahore had strictly forbidden Sikhs to yisit Amritsar and bathe in the holy tank. On all sides of the city strong contingents were posted to arrest every Sikh approaching their sacred shrines. Tall towers were constructed to keep a close watch on fresh arrivals. Mani Singh grew tired of isolated life. He wished to meet the *sangats*. He applied to the Government that the Sikhs might

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be allowed to attend the Baisakhi in 1734, for a tribute of Rs. 5,000, and permission was granted. The real object of the government seemed to be to destroy all the Sikhs gathered there.

Mani Singh sent messages all over the Panjab inviting the Sikhs to celebrate the Baisakhi festival at Amritsar. Young men from far and wide began to pour into the holy city in tens and twenties. The Governor of Lahore sent a strong force to Amritsar on the plea that troops were needed to maintain peace and order. Mani Singh protested that it was his duty to preserve tranquility. Meanwhile a report was received that many more troops were on their way from Lahore to Amritsar. The Sikhs considered it a trap and all of them took to their heels.

No fair was held and no offerings came. Mani Singh had planned to pay Rs, 5,000 out of the offerings, otherwise he had no money with him. The Government demanded the promised fee. Mani Singh blamed the Government for not enabling him to hold the fair. He was arrested and taken to Lahore. The Qazi sentenced him to death, and he was cut to pieces limb by limb on June 24, 1734.[1] A monument in honour of Mani Singh's martyrdom was later on erected on the spot of his execution behind the Lahore Fort. A poet remarked:

Janani jane tān bhakta jan keh dāta keh sūr ;
Nahin tān janani bānjh rahe kāhe gawāve nūr.

[If a woman is to give birth, she should bear generous and brave men, otherwise the woman should remain barren to save her honour.]

This saying is fully applicable to Bhai Mani Singh. He was indeed great in Sikh lore and learning as well as in service and sacrifice.[2]

[1] *Shahid Bilas*, 92; *The Sikh Review*, December, 1972, 6.
[2] Ujagar Singh Sada Anand, 167-203; Ratan Singh Bhangu, *Prachin Panth Prakash*, 272.

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CHAPTER 20

Prominent Sikh Institutions

1. Gurdwara

Hinduism has its temples, Buddhism its stupas, Christianity its churches and Islam its mosques. For a religion scriptures and temples are essential. The religions without one or the other become extinct or survive only in name like the cults of great Gorakh Nath and Kabir.

Guru Nanak went east, west, north and south, all over India. In Muslim villages he stayed near the graveyard in a *Takya* where Muslim *faqirs* generally resided. A *Takya* was situated on the outskirts of a village. It was in charge of a local *faqir* who maintained himself and his family on the lands endowed to the *Takya*. It was his duty to provide meals to a wandering faqir either from his own house or by begging it from villagers. This was a norm which prevailed in Islamic countries all the world over.

In Hindu villages the Guru halted outside the village near a tank or pond or well or in a garden. He could not live in a temple because he was accompanied by Mardana, a Muslim. Hindus had no objection to their putting up in a *dharamshala* which existed in every town in India.

Guru Nanak adopted self-composed poetry and music to convey his message to the people. When he entered a new village or town he chose a suitable place for his performance. Nanak began to sing and Mardana played on his rebec. People surrounded them to listen to their sweet music. All were impressed with the Guru's message of love, tolerance, and praise of God. They were lodged in a *dharamshala*. In the evening men, old women and children flocked to the *dharamshala* to listen to the Guru's discourse and songs. The congregation was called *sangat* and their meeting place with the Guru came to be known as *dharamshal*. Dharamshala therefore became an auditorium, forum, classroom, temple and place of congregation to sing hymns. Here devotion of the congregation was considered of greater importance than money contribution.

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Thus a *dharamsal* implied a meeting place of the Sikhs for the purpose of recitation of Guru's hymns. In the beginning a religious congregation was held at the residence of a devoted Sikh. A special room was reserved for this purpose. When the number of devotees grew larger, the assemblies were held in a *dharamsal*. They were constructed by philanthropic Hindus to provide lodging to travellers or to marriage parties. The Sikhs coming from neighbouring villages to listen to the Guru also put up in these *dharamsal*.

When Nanak settled at Kartarpur, a special *dharamsal* was erected for Sikh gatherings. It became a permanent place of worship for the Sikhs.

Guru Angad established a *dharamsal* at Khadur, his native village, to serve the purpose of a permanent place of worship for the Sikhs. Satta and Balwand, the celebrated singers, were employed to recite *Gurbani*. This attracted large gatherings and made Sikhism popular. The *sangats* were greatly developed and strengthened by the institution of *langar* which was personally looked after by Guru's wife Mata Khivi. Rice boiled in milk (*Khir*) served in a *langar* was highly praised by the two bards, Satta and Balwand, who composed a *Var* on it, and it was included in the *Adi Granth*. Guru Angad started a class in the *dharamsal* to teach Gurmukhi script invented by him.

Guru Amar Das constructed a *dharamsal* at Goindwal. Satta and Balwand also settled there. *Kirtan* was held regularly in the morning and evening. Sarup Das Bhalla has given a fine account of Guru Amar Das's activities.[1] Guru Amar Das made the *langar* an integral part of the *dharamsal*.

During the first four Gurus the Sikh temple was called *dharamsal*. The fifth Guru Arjan named it Hari Mandar. The sixth Guru Hargobind called it *gurdwara*. It implied the gate through which one could reach the Guru. It served as a centre of corporate life of the Sikhs. It was a place for propagating religion. It was also used as a place for social gatherings.

Gurdwaras are of two kinds. First, there are gurdwaras erected everywhere, in every village, town, city and street to meet the religious and social needs of the local people. It may be one room hut or a big mansion. Where the holy Granth is installed, it immediately becomes a gurdwara. To the second category belong historic gurdwaras, such as at Nankana Sahib, Golden Temple at Amritsar,

[1]Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mahman Prakash*, 100-109.

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Keshgarh at Anandpur, Bangla Sahib, Sis Ganj and Rakab Ganj at Delhi, and also at Patna and Nander. They are associated with Gurus.[1]

2. Sangat

Sangat is a group of persons, men, women and children with similar feelings, ideas and values, to stay for a while in the company of the Guru. *Sangat* is a holy assembly on account of the belief that the Guru lived and moved among them, and would bestow happiness on them.

The sangat gathers in a *dharamsal* or gurdwara or at any other place. There they recite or listen to the recitation of Guru's hymns in praise of God. The Guru's *bani* or *shabad* or hymns are in poetry. They are sung in deep devotion. The poetry, music and spiritual devotion all mingle to create sweet rhythm. The singers and listeners as partners enter into holy communion. As the *kirtan* proceeds, the participants draw closer and closer to the Guru and God. The atmosphere transcends to higher regions. Mind becomes purer and heart is filled with joy, love and bliss.[2] Guru Nanak laid great stress on *sangat* which he called *Sat Sangat* or *Sadh Sangat*. Bhai Gurdas declared that the spiritual goal could be achieved through *Sadh Sangat* or holy assemblies. In his 40 *Vars* he dwells on *Sadh Sangat* frequently. No preference is given in the *sangat* to an individual, however great. The *sangats* developed common feelings of brotherhood. As the worship in a Sikh temple consisted only of singing hymns, all the Sikhs felt attracted to be present to enjoy the sweet music, to forget their worldly worries for a time, to share their joys and sorrows with their holy brothers and sisters, and purify their minds. Guru Arjan says :

Gun gavat teri utras mail

[Through singing praises your dirt is washed off.]

Guru Nanak nominated a sincerely devoted Sikh to conduct *sangats*. He was called *sangatia*. The *sangatia* officiated in the *sangat* in place of the Guru and sat on a *manji* or cot in the manner of Guru Nanak. The *manji* was analogous to a *sangat*. The *manjis* developed in course of time into great centres of Sikhism. The *sangatia* presided over the *sangat* during good behaviour and at the most for life. Nanak did not make this office hereditary. Guru Nanak bestowed *manjis* on a number of persons such as Kauda Rakhash, Salis Rae,

[1]Teja Singh, *Asa di Var*, 19, 25, 28.
[2]Darshan Singh, *Indian Bhakti Tradition and Sikh Gurus*, 164-65.

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Jhanda carpenter, Gopal Das, Lalo carpenter, Budhan Shah, Mahi, and Devlut.[1] The central place was called *Bari Sangat* and its branches in different localities of the same place or at other villages were known as *Chhoti Sangat*.

Guru Arjan on completing the *Adi Granth* instructed the Sikhs to hold *kirtan* by singing the holy hymns from *Pothi Sahib* in chorus. He said *kirtan* would serve as food for soul and would satisfy spiritual hunger. The melody of hymns would delight mind and soul of listeners. To begin with *kirtan* was regularly started at the Hari Mandar.

Jhim jhim verse Amrit dhārā
Man pīwe Guru Shabad piārā
[Heavenly bliss falls like steady rain,
The mind drinks it from the Guru's sweet hymns.]

Guru Arjan insisted on his *sangats* to listen to the recitation with attention, devotion and meditation, and not merely for *Kan ras* or pleasure of ears. The *sangat* should concentrate on God and the meaning of the hymns. The minds of *sangats* should be free from worldly affairs. The melody would bring the soul in tune with God. The inner joy would remove affliction and despair.

The first five Gurus sang hymns themselves to the accompaniment of musical instruments. For the devotees it was a celestial scene.

Sikhism is a congregational religion. Every Sikh is expected to attend the *sangat* in a gurdwara in the morning and evening. All sit together on the floor, anywhere they like. There is no reservation of seats. This implies equality. After prayers everybody must get exactly an equal quantity of *karāh prasād*. It indicates removal of caste distinctions.[2]

3. Langar and Pangat

The *langar* or free mess for all attached to Sikh temples is a unique institution. It aimed at removing the distinctions of caste and creed far back five hundred years ago. Since then it has endured through all the ups and downs in Sikh history. It is as popular today as it was in the time of Guru Nanak who established it. It has developed among the Sikhs the spirit of discipline and service and the will to give away something in the cause of religion and humanity. It created and maintained feelings of brotherhood and equality between man and man.

[1]Bala's *Janam Sakhi*, 67, 74, 89, 91.
[2]Pritam Singh Gill, 165.

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In a *langar* all sat in a line without any distinction to eat food cooked and served by persons of any caste. They were called a pangat. The *langar* gives us a glimpse of real Sikhism both in theory and practice.

Guru Nanak

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh religion, had prescribed a certain way of life for his followers:

Kirt karnā, wand chhaknā te Nām japnā

[Earn living by labour, share it with others, and repeat the name of Almighty.]

In Var Sarang he further emphasized:

Ghāli khāe kichu hāthon dehi, Nanak rāhu pachhānih se[1]

(Save, eat and give away something; Nanak! such a person finds the path.]

Thus giving away a part of one's earnings in the service of humanity became a well-established practice in the lifetime of Guru Nanak himself. All the visitors who called upon the Guru to pay homage and listen to his hymns brought something in kind as an offering. When people came individually or in twos and threes, the Guru distributed the offerings among the poor, the needy and those present. When congregations became larger and more regular, the Guru established a *langar* or a free mess for all for the consumption of the presents which were generally in the form of raw foodstuff. In the kitchen and mess men and women worked and ate together without any consideration of caste or social status. *Langar* became a symbol of equality and brotherhood.

Earning one's bread, saving something and giving away a part in charity was to be rewarded in life after death. In *Var Asa* he said:

Nanak agai so milāi, .
je khate, ghāle, de.

He defined a truly religious person thus:

Gali jog nā hoi
Ek dristi kari samsār janāi
Jogi kahiye soi

[Religion does not consist in words, one who looks on all persons as equal is religious.]

This was secularism and socialism, pure and simple. Guru Nanak attached great importance to *langar*. Wherever he stayed during his

[1] *Adi Granth,* 1245.

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wanderings he tried to open a *langar*. The people who gathered to listen to him were called *sangat*, and those who dined in the *langar* were known as *pangat*. *Sangat* and *pangat* formed necessary accompaniment of each other and were inseparable. The place where the Guru put up was named *dharamsal*, Bhai Gurdas says:

Jithe Bābā pair dhare pujā āsan thāpan soā,
Ghar ghar andar dharamsāl hove kīrtan sadā visoa.[1]

[Wherever the Baba put his feet, it became a place of worship. Every home and house became a *dharamsal* where holy hymns were sung perpetually.]

Guru Nanak insisted upon his disciples to share their meals with others, visitors, strangers, friends and foes alike. Every Sikh was expected to contribute liberally for the maintenance of Guru ka Langar. This could be done by making an offering in cash, kind and personal labour in cleaning, cooking and serving meals.

The last years of Guru Nanak's life were spent at Kartarpur on the western bank of the river Ravi now in Pakistan. His house served as a *dharamsal*, a place of worship as well as a free mess.

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Guru Angad

Nanak's example was followed par excellence by all his successors. Guru Angad opened Guru-ka-*langar* at Khadur where he had established his headquarters. His wife Mata Khivi looked after its arrangements and personally served in the preparation and distribution of food. She always served a sweet dish of rice-milk (*khir*), the coveted food of Panjabis. The Guru's two minstrels, Satta and Balwand, have thus praised her:

Balwand Khivi nek jān jis bahuti chhāon patiāli,
Langar daulat wandiai ras amrit khir ghiāli.[2]

[Says Balwand, Khivi was a noble person who offered great help and distributed in the *langar* riches like ambrosial preparation of sugarcane juice, rice and milk all boiled together as well as ghi or clarified butter.]

Guru Amar Das

Guru Amar Das shifted his seat from Khadur to Goindwal on the river Beas. He converted the *langar* into a regular institution by

[1]Gurdas, *Var* I, *Pauri* 27.
[2]Parkash Singh, *The Sikh Gurus and the Temple of Bread*, 42, fn.

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making it a rule that every visitor should dine in the *langar* before seeing him. Even Emperor Akbar was requested to follow this practice and he cheerfully did so. The Guru added another sweet dish of pudding or *karāh prasād* which in course of time became their consecrated dish. Satta and Balwand say:

Nit rasoi teri ai ghio maida khan[1]

[Every day in your kitchen was served pudding made of clarified butter, refined flour and sugar].

Guru Amar Das earned his bread by carrying on petty trade in salt and oil which could only bring him simple and course food. Bhai Budha suggested that the same food as eaten by the Guru should be served in the *langar*. The Guru objected to it saying that the flavour and nourishment of the food eaten by his Sikhs was also inwardly enjoyed by him. Thereupon Bhai Jetha, later Guru Ram Das, composed the following hymn:

Mātā parīt kare put khāi
Mīna parīt bhai jal nāi,
Satgur parīt Guru Sikh mukh pāi.[2]

[As a mother loves to see her son eating, As a fish loves water, So the true Guru loves to see his disciples eating.]

The Other Gurus

With the succession of Guru Ram Das Amritsar became the headquarters of the fourth, the fifth and the sixth Gurus. The Guru-ka-langar also went there. One day Guru Ram Das paid a visit to the *langar*. A Sikh named Handal was kneading flour in a huge pan. On seeing the Guru he rushed to prostrate himself before him. As his hands were covered with wet flour, he put them on his back, and fell flat at the Guru's feet. The Guru was pleased with his devotion and blessed him.[3]

The *langar* was maintained by Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind with equal zeal and zest. During the latter's lifetime his son, Atal, was in charge of the *langar*. He supplied food from Guru-ka-langar to the Sikhs in the battlefield. His service and devotion led to a proverb which says :

[1]Parkash Singh, *The Sikh Gurus and the Temple of Bread*, 44, fn.
[2]ibid, 46, fn.
[3].bid, 56-57.

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Bābā Atal
Pakki Pakāi ghal
[Baba Atal, supply cooked meals.]

When Guru Hargobind settled at Kiratpur, *langar* continued to exist there. Mohsin Fani, who lived at Kiratpur during the last phase of Guru's life, mentions an incident. One of the Guru's disciples was Jhanda, a rich man. One day the Guru asked his Sikhs to fetch fuel wood from the jungle for Guru-ka-langar. Jhanda used to wait on the Guru daily. On this occasion he remained absent for two days. The Guru sent men to inquire about him. He was not found at home. A search was made in the neighbourhood. He was seen coming from a jungle with a bundle of firewood on his back. Hargobind remonstrated with him for having undertaken such a menial job. He replied that the Guru had asked his Sikhs to fetch wood. He was a Sikh and therefore went to the jungle. As he was not accustomed to break wood, it took him time to collect it.

The seventh Guru, Har Rae, preserved the tradition at Nahan where he lived for twelve long years. It was maintained during the time of Guru Har Krishan. As Guru Tegh Bahadur remained mostly on the move, a mobile *langar* followed him.

Guru Gobind Singh not only maintained his own *langar*, but insisted on others to do so. One day in disguise he called at the *langars* of his notable and rich disciples rather at odd hours. He found most of them unwilling to receive him before time. Bhai Nandlal, however, served him as best as he could. The following day he narrated his experience in a durbar and advised them to offer something to eat to visitors even at irregular times. The Guru continued :—

"There is nothing equal to the bestowal of food. Blest is the man who giveth to the really hungry. Let no one fix a time for the exercise of this virtue. It is not necessary to consider whether it is night or day, evening or morning, whether the moon is dark or full, or if there is a particular anniversary. Nor is it necessary to consider what the social position of the applicant may be. Avoid all delay in such a matter. Charity is of all gifts the greatest, for it saveth life."[1]

Later on Deg, Teg and Fatah became the slogan and ideal of Sikh life. It means :

Serve food, apply sword and gain victory.

[1]Macauliffe, V, 105.

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A *langar* forms a necessary part of every big Gurdwara today.[1]

The institution of langar proved of great help in establishing social equality, in breaking bonds of caste system, in establishing dignity of labour and in developing spirit of service and unity.

4. Manji and Masand

A *Manji* was a territorial division as well as a missionary order for the purpose of preaching. Guru Amar Das granted *manjis* to certain persons, men and women of good character. Such a person could establish a *manji* in his own home, village or at other places.[2]

Those who did not become Sikhs, but attended their meetings were called *meli*. The occasional visitors and sympathisers were designated *sahlang*.

Its origin took place in the time of the third Guru, Amar Das, 1552-1574. Amar Das had become Guru at the age of seventy-three. The Sikhs did not belong to one place. They were scattered over a large area. The previous Gurus moved about freely preaching and meeting their disciples. Guru Amar Das being old could not visit distant places. But he wished to keep himself in contact with every Sikh. Besides his headquarters at Goindwal was frequently visited by Sikhs, and his presence there had become necessary. He wanted that their normal routine life should be preserved and that they should be trained in a certain discipline.

For this purpose he established separate centres called *manjis* or cots on which a preacher sat to sing hymns to be followed in chorus by the congregation. The congregations were called *sangats* and the preacher *sangatia*. The Guru divided the whole area inhabited by the Sikhs into twenty-two *manjis* or districts.[3]

The *sangats* in the *manjis* were regularly addressed by the most devoted *sangatias*. Sometimes eminent men were sent from headquarters to address *sangats* in the mofussil. They preached and propagated Sikhism, and administered the spiritual and secular needs of

[1]In 1930 the author was a member of a historical trip organised by the late Professor Sohan Lal, the famous Panjabi Geographer. It consisted of about 300 persons including 50 women students. On our way to the Khaibar Pass, we visited the celebrated Sikh shrine of Panja Sahib at Hasan Abdal between Rawalpindi and Attock. The organisers of the Gurdwara compelled us to dine in the *langar*, and served food to all at one sitting in an hour.

[2]Fauja Singh, *Guru Amar Das, Life and Teachings.*

[3]cf. Kanhiya Lal, *Tarikh-e-Panjab*, 19.

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Sikhs in their districts and collected offerings for the Guru. All the contributions thus received were spent on maintaining *langar*.

The status and rank of *sangatias* was considerably raised by Guru Arjan, 1581-1606. Immediately after his succession he decided to complete the tanks of Amritsar and Santokhsar, extending the hamlet of Ramdaspura and erecting temples in the tanks. This required money. Adopting the practice of the Muslim Zakat,[1] Guru Arjan converted voluntary offerings into compulsory contributions.[2] He called upon *sangatias* to collect offerings from the Sikhs at the rate of one-tenth of their income called *Daswandh*. They were upgraded as *masands*. Masand is the corrupted Panjabi form of the Persian word musannad which means exalted or raised high. In Sikh terminology it was a title as well as an institution. Mohsin Fani writes:

"It may be pointed out that during the rule of Afghan kings the court nobles were addressed as Musannad-e-āli. On account of its frequent application Indians converted it into *masands*. As the Sikhs called their Gurus veritable kings (*Sachchā bādshāh*), and considered them real rulers, their agents (gumashta) were called *masands*. They were also called Ramdas."[3] They preached, settled disputes and kept the Sikhs under a regular administrative system. The *masands* were not paid any salary. They retained a portion of the offerings received by them, with the approval of the Guru. All the offerings were presented every six months by the *masands* to the Guru on the festival days of Baisakhi and Diwali. Most of the *masands* were Jats, while a few were Brahmans and Khatris. At the time of departure the Guru bestowed upon *masands* turbans or robes of honour,"[4] called *saropās* or a covering from head to foot.

Through *masands* number of Sikhs grew to such an extent that the senior *masands* appointed their own deputies in every place and quarter.[5] The *masand* system worked well during the time of Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind. Guru Har Rae stayed away from his headquarters at Nahan for twelve years. During this period the *masands* began to assert an independent attitude in the Guru's

[1] *Zakat*, means alms, the fortieth part of a Muslim's income to be given in charity every year as enjoined by *The Quran*.

[2] *The Dabistan*, 233.

[3] ibid.

[4] ibid.

[5] ibid.

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absence, and remitted to him at their sweet will only a portion of the offering received. The eighth Guru, Har Krishan, was a child, and died when he was only eight years old. At this period there was no check on *masands* and they became independent for all practical purposes. The office of *masand* became hereditary.

As testified by Bhai Gurdas and Mohsin Fani, the majority of followers of the first four Gurus were Khatris and Aroras. It was during Guru Arjan's time that the Majha Jats flocked to Sikhism. His *masands* were also mostly Jats. The Khatris and Aroras were traders. They were soft spoken. The Jats were agriculturists. They compelled nature by physical force to yield. As *masands* they could not get rid of their aggressive character. During the pontificate of Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind they remained submissive, but afterwards they asserted themselves fearlessly.

After the death of Guru Har Krishan several descendants of Guru Hargobind claimed guruship, while Tegh Bahadur, the youngest son of the sixth Guru, had been nominated to that office. A claimant to guruship named Dhirmal employed one of his *masands* to kill Tegh Bahadur. The *masand* shot a bullet at the Guru and wounded him. He also carried off Tegh Bahadur's property. After his succession Guru Tegh Bahadur remained outside Panjab for six or seven years, and on his return he was involved in a conflict with the Mughal Government. Thus no check was exercised upon *masands*. They began to gather riches and power for themselves, and became corrupt.

Guru Gobind Singh was at Paonta when Ram Rae, the eldest son of Guru Har Rae came from Dehra Dun to see him. Ram Rae had been so much worried over the conduct of his *masands* that he said:

"I am fortunate to have obtained a sight of thee; I have now but a brief time to live. My *masands* are very proud. When I am gone, protect my family and property."[1]

After some time Ram Rae while sitting in meditation fell into a trance. The *masands* declared him dead. His wife Panjab Kaur protested saying that he often remained in physical insensibility. The *masands* did not care and cremated him. Then they seized his valuable property. Panjab Kaur sought help from Guru Gobind Singh. She fixed a day for serving a feast in honour of her deceased husband. All the *masands* gathered there. Just then Guru Gobind Singh appeared on the scene at the head of a strong contingent.

[1]Macauliffe, V, 21.

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In the presence of all the *masands*, Panjab Kaur told the Guru how the *masands* had misbehaved. They demanded liquor and opium from Ram Rae's followers. They kept courtezans. They oppressed people. They kept major part of the offerings for themselves. Last of all they had killed their Guru and plundered his property. They were severely punished for their misdeeds.[1]

On his return to Anandpur, the Guru invited all his *masands* to attend the fair of Baisakhi. They came with a small part of the offerings collected by them. The Guru said that they had paid nothing since the time of Guru Har Rae, and what they brought was little. The *masands* replied that the rich Sikhs were dead, and the poor could not afford much. The Guru demanded his full share. The *masands* left the court and said among themselves.

"The Guru is of our own making. If we did not contribute the money necessary for his maintenance, no one would call him a Guru."[2]

The Guru came to know that some *masands* billeted themselves on poor Sikhs and demanded delicious dishes and sweets. In one case a *masand* threw the boiled pulse at his host's face because he did not like to have simple and plain food. The man was profusely abused and insulted. In the end he sold his wife's clothes to entertain him. Sukha Singh (1768-1838) says that a Sikh from Bengal gave for the Guru a web of fine Dhaka muslin to *masand* Suchayya who kept it for himself. After sometime the Sikh came to Anandpur and presented another web of the same material. The Guru liked it immensely. He told the Guru that he had given a similar piece to the *masand* a year ago for the Guru.[3]

One day some buffoons acted a mimicry of *masands* in the durbar of Guru Gobind Singh. One became a *masand*, two men his servants and the fourth a courtezan sitting on horseback behind the *masand*. The clowns showed how the offerings were forcibly exacted and what wickedness was committed by them on poor and innocent Sikhs. A *Hukam Nama* issued on Phagun Shudi Sammat 1750 (19 February, 1694) asked a *sangat* to bring the Sikhs and their offerings to the Guru on the Baisakhi day. It means that the *masands* were functioning in 1694.[4]

[1]ibid, 22-23.

[2]ibid, 84.

[3]Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas Patshahi Daswin*, quoted by Ajit Singh Baagha, *The Sikh Review*, January, 1973, 19.

[4]No. 42 in Ganda Singh's *Hukam Nama* and no. 69 in Ashok's compilation on the same subject.

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The Guru decided to rid his disciples of the *masands'* tyranny and villainy. In the *Hukam Namas* of 1698, the Guru says that further instructions to the Khalsa would be issued in the new era. It shows that the Guru had made up his mind six months before the foundation of the Khalsa on the New Year Day which would be the beginning of the new era of Sikhism.

On 12 March, 1699, he issued a *Hukam Nama* to the *sangat* of Machhiwara prohibiting them from handing over any offerings meant for the Guru to a *masand* and such things should be personally presented. Other Hukam Namas also issued later on contained clear instructions to various *sangats* not to have anything to do with *masands* whether men or women.[1] Immediately after the foundation of the Khalsa he abolished the *masand* system altogether. He ordered that in future all the offerings should be made to him directly, and no Sikh should pay anything to a *masand.* This was a great deed and sent a wave of happiness among the Sikhs.[2]

This measure not only freed the Sikhs from humiliation and oppression but also restored a close personal bond between the Guru and his disciples.

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5. Piri Miri and Akal Takht

During his imprisonment and torture at Lahore, Guru Arjan had been contemplating how to save his nascent religion from destruction. In his most intense meditation God revealed Himself to him. He was told to guard it by means of a physical force. He therefore conveyed to his eleven-year-old son and successor his last message that he should maintain an army as best as he could afford and manage.[3]

In order to carry out his father's dying injunction, he wore two swords of Piri and Miri. The sword of Piri was to protect the innocent and the sword of Miri to smite the oppressor. He declared that henceforth in the Guru's house spiritual and temporal powers would be combined.

Guru Arjan addressed the Sikhs on religious as well as on worldly affairs from Hari Mandar. Guru Hargobind decided to separate religious and mundane functions. Hari Mandar was therefore exclusively reserved for religious and spiritual discourses and for recitations from

[1]*Hukam Nama* edited by Ganda Singh, no. 43; *Nishan Ate Hukam Name* by Shamsher Singh Ashok, no. 74.

[2]Macauliffe, V, 86.

[3]ibid, III, 99.

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the *Adi Granth*. To conduct his temporal affairs he constructed in 1606[1] another structure opposite Hari Mandar on the edge of the holy tank at Amritsar and called it Akal Takht or Throne of God the Timeless.

Here the Guru sat as a representative of God like a king in court and administered justice to the Sikhs and conducted other non-religious affairs. Here he accepted offerings from Sikhs directly as well as from *masands*. From this place he issued orders and circular letters calling for the gifts of arms.[2] He narrated stories of heroism, dauntless bravery, discipline and sacrifice. He employed professional bards, the most notable of whom were Abdullah and Natha. They sang ballads of unrivalled heroism, especially of Rajput chivalry. The tales of the valour of Jaimal and Fatta of Chitor being of recent occurrence, were sung with zeal and zest and were on everybody's tongue.[3] He witnessed duels and wrestling matches from this place. While Hari Mandar was the house of religion, Akal Takht was the place of Sikh politics. The presence of both at different sites indicated that in Sikhism politics had been separated from religion. While the Guru was in Hari Mandar, he was reckoned as a saint, and when on Akal Takht he was looked upon as a king. The Sikhs henceforth stopped filing their cases in the government courts. They considered the tract occupied by the Sikhs as the Sikh kingdom, Amritsar as its capital and Guru Hargobind as Sachcha Padshah in contrast to the Mughal Emperor who was a false king because he ruled by force and fear alone without creating any bond between himself and his general subjects.

Thus Piri and Miri worked hand in hand. It was a combination of spiritual and political sovereignty. Both were vested in the Guru, the perfect man. The aim was to create the Kingdom of God on earth, a *Ramrajya* or *dharmarajya*, through *rajyogis*, the philosopher-kings. Plato said:

"Until kings are philosophers, or philosophers are kings, cities will never cease from ill, no, nor the human race, nor will our ideal polity ever come into being."[4]

The Gurus were of the view that social and political freedom was

[1] *Report Sri Darbar Sahib*, 459; Macauliffe, IV. 3.
[2] *Gurbilas Patshahi Chhewin*, 118-19.
[3] ibid.
[4] Plato, *Republic*, V.

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the birth right of every human being. This objective could be achieved only when Gurmukhs or virtuous persons were kings or kings were Gurmukhs. This principle was put into execution by the sixth Guru, Hargobind. It was the beginning of militarism or the transformation of Sikhism. To the symbols of sainthood, rosary and Name was added the paraphernalia of sovereignty including the umbrella and the crest. With meditation and preaching were included wrestling, riding and hunting.

This was also the beginning of a Sikh State like that of the Mughals. All his disciples formed a separate and independent entity, and had nothing to do with the agencies of the Government of the day. Thus the Sikhs came to occupy a kind of a separate state within the Mughal state, the position of which was securely established by the fiscal policy of Guru Amar Das and Guru Arjan and Hargobind's armed system.

Guru Hargobind began to recruit hardy youths of Majha as his bodyguard in addition to the fifty-two soldiers inherited from his father. In course of time he possessed a stable of seven hundred horses, three hundred horsemen and sixty gunners.[1] His infantry consisted of another five hundred brave young men of Majha and Malwa. Besides many who were content with two meals a day and a new uniform every six months on the occasions of Baisakhi and Diwali joined the Guru.[2] He sanctioned meat diet and encouraged hunting.

The Mughal Government took a serious notice of the young Guru's activities. The contemporary author, Mohsin Fani, writes:

"He had to contend with difficulties. One of them was that he had adopted the style of a soldier, wore a sword contrary to the practice of his father, kept a retinue and took to hunting. Hazrat Jannat Makani (Jahangir) demanded the balance of the fine which he had imposed on Arjan Mal."[3] The Guru was summoned to Delhi and imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior in 1609 AD where he remained for about twelve years.

On his release in 1620 the Guru was invested with supervisory powers to suppress any Hindu disturbance in the state. A Mughal contingent consisting of about 400 horse, 1000 foot and seven guns

[1] *The Dabistan*, 235-36.
[2] Macauliffe, IV, 4-5.
[3] *The Dabistan*, 234.

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was placed at his disposal. The Guru increased his personal force also considerably.

With the succession of Shah Jahan, religious bigotry began to strike root in the policy of the government. A conflict soon arose between Guru Hargobind and the government. About half a dozen battles were fought with the Mughal troops. While mentioning a particular incident, Mohsin Fani writes, "Before this and after this many strong forces were sent against him. By God's grace he escaped unhurt, though whatever he had was lost."[1]

Thus the Guru set a noble example before the down-trodden and frustrated Hindus that the passive resistance to the oppressor was useless. Guru Hargobind had a clear conception of the changing circumstances and had realised the necessity of playing an active role in the political life of non-Muslims. He knew that militarily he had little chance of success against almost the unlimited resources of the Mughal Empire, yet he discarded the submissive role which was the common feature of a Hindu's life individually as well as collectively with few exceptions here and there. His policy of active resistance paved the way for future developments under his grandson, Guru Gobind Singh.

Akal Takht became the pivot of military and political activities of the Sikhs during the Misl period. It was here that the most important decisions were made regarding war and peace. The decisions taken there were respected by the entire Sikh community.[2] Akal Takht did not remain the seat for political and military decisions during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, but it remained the focus for central management. Its control was in the hands of Akalis Akal Takht now consists of five storeys. The first storey was constructed by Sikh Sardars in 1774 AD. The remaining four stories were built by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The uppermost golden dome (*gumbaz*) was erected by Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa.

The Akal Takht is the most prominent of all the Takhts, the others being Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur, Takht Sri Patna Sahib, and Takht Sri Hazur Sahib, Nander.

6. Sacred festivals of the Sikhs

There are numerous Sikh fairs and festivals. Some are of local importance as Maghi of Muktsar and Hola Mohalla of Anandpur.

[1] *The Dabistan*, 235.
[2] Gian Singh, *Sri Guru Panth Prakash*, 803.

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The most important festivals are observed by the Sikhs wherever they are. On such occasions the whole Sikh families of a particular place gather in a gurdwara. It is properly decorated and illuminated. The *Granth* is read constantly. Hymns are sung in chorus or by professional Sikh singers. Prayer is said. Sweet pudding (*karāhprasād*) is distributed in the whole congregation. In hot weather sweetened and iced water is served at various places. Houses are lighted in the evening. A free *langar* at the main gurdwara is a must for every fair and festival. As the congregations gather in thousands, the festival is usually converted into a fair. Innumerable shops, stalls, recreation centres spring up everywhere for the shopping and entertainments of visitors. The fair begins a day before and ends a day after the actual day of celebration.

Guru Nanak's birthday

It is celebrated on Kartik Puranmashi or full-moon-day in the month of November. Preceding that day 48 hours *Akhand Path* or continuous reading without any break of the holy *Adi Granth* by a relay of readers is observed in every gurdwara. A day before the birthday a grand procession is taken out into the streets and bazars through decorated gates. It is led by five holy men, followed by the *Adi Granth* in a palanquin. Behind the sacred book are several parties of singers who recite the hymns of the *Granth*. The other members of the procession participate in reciting the hymns in chorus. On the birthday hymns are sung by professional singers early in the morning long before dawn. The devotees keep on pouring into the gurdwara making voluntary offerings and saluting the *Granth* by halfway prostrating before it, and then sit down and quietly listen to the praises of God.

Guru Arjan's martyrdom day

Guru Arjan's martyrdom day falls towards the close of May or beginning of June. In Lahore before partition almost every Hindu and Sikh was out to visit the Guru's *samadhi* or tomb. At short intervals there were *sabils* where sweetened and iced milk-water was served to every passer-by. The number of visitors was in lakhs, not in thousands. Arrangements were so perfect that the parents of a lost child could be traced in no time. At numerous places there were parties of singers singing hymns, lectures, sermons and *kathas* or narration of stories from sacred scriptures. Nowadays this day is cele-

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brated everywhere in gurdwaras and by leading processions and serving cold drinks free.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom day

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom day falls in November-December. The day is celebrated by organising processions, singing hymns in gurdwaras, and by organising lectures, sermons, *kirtans*, etc.

Guru Gobind Singh's birthday

Guru Gobind Singh's birthday falls in December-January. It is a three-day-celebration as in the case of Guru Nanak, consisting of *Akhand Path*, processions and congregations.

Baisakhi

Baisakhi generally falls in the first half of April. It is the birthday of Khalsa. This is also a three-day-celebration at great centres and one-day celebration at other places. *Kirtans*, *kathas*, lectures and *langars*, form the essential parts of the day's function. Every Sikh family is out to the gurdwara. They are joined by Hindus also in this celebration.

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Diwali

This is mainly the Hindu festival. The Sikhs adopted it as one of their main festivals because the sixth Guru, Hargobind, arrived at Amritsar on the Diwali day after his twelve year's imprisonment at Gwalior. Further, the major *gurmatas* of Sikhs in the eighteenth century were held on this day. They generally pertained to face Ahmad Shah Durrani who invaded India in October-November every second or third year. The day is observed by arranging *kirtans*, *kathas*, lectures, *langars*, illuminations, fireworks and sweets.

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CHAPTER 21

Notable Sources of the Guru Period

Hindus had no love for history. They cared most for religion and philosophy. Like the Hindus the Sikhs also displayed no inclination to write their own history. Hence there is a great dearth of source material for writing an authentic and comprehensive history of Sikh Gurus.

The original material of this period is available only in Gurmukhi and Persian. It is very meagre, and does not give much of historical evidence. The Sikh sources are mainly religious in nature. The historical material is based on tradition alone, with little historical evidence in record. Similarly the Persian sources are also scanty, and do not contain much of substantial historical value.

Janam Sakhis of Guru Nanak

Stories of Guru Nanak's birth and previous lives are called Janam Sakhis. They are not biographies but hagiographies. They were written by the Guru's admirers in the last quarter of sixteenth century or during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. All of them have a lot of supernatural material and miracle stories. They are a mixture of facts and fiction. They were compiled for the faithful and not for students of history. They were written in Panjabi language in Gurmukhi script. They describe Nanak's life in the form of stories and anecdotes, while his teachings are illustrated by dialogues. About a dozen Janam Sakhis have been written. Of these the following Janam Sakhis are important.

1. Janam Sakhi of Bhai Bala

Bala was one of the earliest companions of Guru Nanak. He belonged to Talwandi, Nanak's home-town. He was a Sandhu Jat. On the first page of this Janam Sakhi it is stated that it was dictated by Bala, written by Bhaira Mokha and approved by Guru Angad. But this Janam Sakhi is considered spurious. It is believed that this Janam

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Sakhi was written about 1650 by a follower of Baba Handal Niranjaniya to disparage Guru Nanak. It was also corrupted by Minas later on.

2. Puratan or Wilayatwali or Hafizabadwali Janam Sakhi

This Janam Sakhi was written in 1635 AD. It is considered to be the oldest Janam Sakhi, and so is called Puratan Janam Sakhi. It was taken to England by H.T. Colebrook in 1815 or 1816 and used by Trumpp in 1872. Therefore it is known as Wilayatwali Janam Sakhi. As its copy was discovered at Hafizabad, now in Pakistan, it is called Hafizabadwali Janam Sakhi. Its writer is unknown, but it is considered a genuine source for Guru Nanak.

3. Sodhi Meharban's Janam Sakhi

Guru Arjan was the fifth Guru. His eldest brother was Prithi Mal. He became a bitter enemy of Arjan because he had been superseded by his younger brother. He had many followers. His son was called Guru Meharban. Their followers called themselves *Bhaktas* while Guru Arjan's Sikhs designated them Minas or contemptible. Meharban wrote this Janam Sakhi in the first half of the seventeenth century. In it he glorified his father. On the whole this Janam Sakhi is considered dependable because (i) names of persons and places mentioned in it are generally correct, (ii) there are few miracle stories, and (iii) its dates are accurate.

4. Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sakhi

Bhai Mani Singh expanded Bhai Gurudas's 1st Var into a full Janam Sakhi and called it *Gian Ratnavali*. It is regarded as one of the most important Janam Sakhis of Guru Nanak. It was written in the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

5. Janampatri (horoscope) of Guru Nanak

It is a short biography of Guru Nanak. It was written about 1700 AD, and was published in 1969 by Piar Singh. The name of the author is not given. Probably it was prepared by some Pandit. It states that Guru Nanak served as a store-keeper under Daulat Khan Lodi at Sultanpur in the Jalandhar Doab, and met Babar at Sayyidpur.

6. Others

Mahman Prakash Vartik of Bawa Kirpal Singh, *Mahman Prakash Kavita* of Sarupdas Bhalla and Bhai Gurdas's Vars and Kabits though

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not Janam Sakhis, throw great light on the life and work of Guru Nanak.

The Adi Granth (Gurmukhi)

The *Adi Granth* was composed by Guru Arjan in 1604. It contains hymns of the first five Gurus, fifteen *Bhaktas* both Hindu and Muslim and songs of four minstrels. Later on hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur were also added to it. This is the greatest authority on Sikh religion. In it we can trace the development of religious thoughts and ideas. As its arrangement is based on musical measures, the development of Indian music can also be traced therein. For instance Guru Nanak employed nineteen musical measures in his hymns. Guru Arjan used thirty-one *Ragas* only out of eighty-four. The *Adi Gronth* also contains references to political, social, and economic life of the people of Panjab. in Vars Asa, Majh, Malar and Ramkali.

Babar Vani

In four hymns collectively called Babar Vani, Guru Nanak says that the administration of Lodi Sultans was rotten to the core and full of corruption. Justice did not exist. Hindus were looked upon as slaves. There was no security for their life, honour and property. Hindus took to falsehood and hypocricy to save themselves. They adopted the Muslim way of living. Even their gods and goddesses were robed in blue to please their masters.

Nanak gives a detailed and heart-rending account of Babar's massacre of Sayyidpur where the Guru was then present. Babar himself admits in his Memoris that people of Sayyidpur were killed, their women and children were taken prisoners, and their property was looted.

Akbar Nama (Persian)

Abul Fazl's *Akbar Nama* gives a good account of Panjab and has some references to Sikh Gurus. In particular it mentions Emperor Akbar's visit to Guru Arjan at Goindwal on November 24, 1598 AD

Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri (Persian)

In this work Emperor Jahangir records his own impressions about Guru Arjan, and gives reasons for ordering his execution.

Dabistan-e-Mazahib (Persian)

Mohsin Fani was a contemporary of the fifth, sixth and seventh

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Gurus. He spent fifteen years in Panjab and Kashmir. He was in close touch through correspondence with Guru Hargobind, and was present at Kiratpur at the time of Guru's death. His work, *Dabistan-e-Mazahib*, being the account of an independent writer is of great value. Some of his observations are quoted here.

1. The Sikhs believe that all Gurus are Nanak.
2. The Guru's senior *masands* are mainly Jats.
3. As the Sikhs call the Gurus true monarchs, their agents are named *masands*.
4. The Emperor Nur-ud-din Jahangir summoned Arjan Mal on account of his having blessed the King's son Khusrau who had rebelled against his father. After the capture of Khusrau an explanation was called for and cautious money was demanded from Arjan. The Guru expressed his inability to pay fine. He was kept as a prisoner in the sandy country of Lahore. He died of the excessive heat of summer and torture by bailiffs.
5. He (Hargobind) had many difficulties to contend with. One of them was that he adopted the style of a soldier, wore a sword contrary to the custom of his father, maintained a retinue, and took to hunting. The Emperor in order to extort from him the balance of the fine which had been imposed on Arjan Mal, sent him to Gwalior, where he remained for twelve years. They would not let him relish even bare bread with salt.
6. During this time *masands* and Sikhs used to go there and bow before the walls of the fort (768 kilometres distant) until the Emperor out of commiseration released the Guru.
7. He returned to Ramdaspur where Guru Ram Das and Arjan Mal had erected lofty buildings and a beautiful tank. There he was attacked by the army of imperial officials under orders of Shah Jahan, and the Guru's property was plundered.
8. From that place he hastened to Kartarpur.
9. In that place he had to fight a battle....In that battle a man aimed his sword at the Guru, who parried it, and struck him with his own sword, and said, "That is not the way of striking, it should be struck in this manner, and with one stroke he cut off his life."
10. In short, after the battle of Kartarpur he went to Phagwara. As his staying in places near Lahore was risky, he retired in haste to Kiratpur, which lies in Panjab hills.
11. The Guru had 700 horses in his stable, and 300 mounted troopers and 60 gunners were always in his service.

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12. Every fugitive could well find an asylum with him.

13. When his corpse was placed on pyre and set afire, and when the flames shot up, Raja Ram, a Rajput servant of his, instantly jumped into the blazing fire, and walking a few paces in it, took himself to the feet of the Guru. He laid his face unto the soles of Guru's feet, and did not move at all till he lay dead. After him, a son of a Jat, who was in the service of Guru's son-in-law, leapt into the flames. Thereafter a good many people thought of following suit, but this time Guru Har Rae forbade them.

14. Guru Hargobind in his correspondence addressed the author with the title of Nanak, the head of this sect. The writer saw him at Kiratpur in 1643 AD.

15. Har Rae stayed at Kiratpur for one year, and when in 1645-46 AD, Najabat Khan, the son of Shah Rukh Mirza, at the instance of Emperor Shah Jahan, staged an attack on the country of Raja Tara Chand, conquered it, and took the Raja prisoner, Guru Har Rae retired to Thapal (Nahan) in the country of Raja Karam Prakash in the vicinity of Sarhind.

16. Sikhs call Har Rae Mohalla Seventh. He is a great friend of the author.

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KHULASAT-UT-TWARIKH (Persian)

Sujan Rae Bhandari of Batala wrote his *Khulasat-ut-Twarikh* in 1695, four years before the foundation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh. It contains a few useful references to the Sikhs, and gives valuable topographical details. It was edited and published by M. Zafar Hasan of Delhi in 1918. Translation of certain parts of this book was published in Jadunath Sarkar's *India of Aurangzib* in 1901.

BACHITRA NATAK (Gurmukhi)

Bachitra Natak by Guru Gobind Singh is a highly valuable handbook. It tells us something about the earlier Gurus, Guru Gobind Singh's mission, his relations with the neighbouring hill rajas, battles of Bhangani and Nadaun, expeditions of Khanzada and Husain Khan, assault delivered by Jujhar Singh, and arrival in Panjab of Aurangzeb's son Muazzam, later Emperor Bahadur Shah, 1707 to 1712.

SRI GUR SOBHA (Gurmukhi)

Sainapat was one of the fifty-two poets employed by Guru Gobind Singh. The events recorded by him in *Sri Gur Sobha* were based either

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on his own personal observations or on personal enquiries made from reliable persons, who had accompanied the Guru to Nander. It is our main source of information for Guru Gobind Singh's life and career during the post-Khalsa period. Sainapat commenced writing this work in September, 1701, and completed it in 1711.

Zafar Nama (Persian)

Zafar Nama is the title of a long letter addressed by Guru Gobind Singh to Aurangzeb from Dina in Malwa desert in 1705. By this time the Guru had suffered much. He had lost his father, mother, all the four sons, thousands of his disciples, his books, manuscripts and entire property as a result of Emperor's bigotry and tyranny, and the Guru openly blamed Aurangzeb for his misfortunes.

The Dasam Granth (Gurmukhi)

Guru Gobind Singh had prepared numerous manuscripts. All of them were lost while crossing the river Sarsa in December, 1704. Several copies of his works were made. When the Guru was staying at Damdama Sahib, he began to collect them. They were compiled in one volume by Bhai Mani Singh. It was called *Dasam Granth*. This Granth contains *Jāp*, *Bachitra Natak* or Guru's own autobiography, *Akal Ustat* or praise of God, *Chandi ki Var* or the praise of Durga, the goddess of war, *Gian Prabodh* or the awakening of knowledge, *Chaubis Avtars* or twenty-four warlike incarnations of God, *Swayyas* or religious hymns in praise of God, *Shastar Nam Mala* or a description of weapons of war, both offensive and defensive, *Triya Charitar* or the character of women, and *Zafar Nama* or the epistle of victory.

The *Dasam Granth* is full of national spirit throughout. Most of the characters appear as soldiers and generals. In the wars women and children also play a heroic role. The spirit of self-sacrifice pervades in the whole composition. It gives us a glimpse of the contemporary life as it then existed. We come across fascinating accounts of the spring festival of Holi, marriage, heavy rains, flooded streams, clear blue sky, methods of warfare, weapons used, tactics employed in fighting and accounts of some of the prominent personalities and places of the period.

Ahkam-e-Alamgiri (Persian)

It is a collection of Aurangzeb's orders made by Mirza Inayatullah Khan, later on Governor of Kashmir, and a Mansabdar of the rank

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of 7,000, in two volumes called *Ahkām-e-Alamgiri* and *Kalimāt-e-Tayibāt*. One letter says that a Sikh *gurdwara* was demolished at Buriya on the Yamuna and a mosque was built in its place. The Sikhs killed the officer in charge of the mosque. Another letter mentions Guru Gobind Singh's taking shelter at Chamkaur, and the capture of Guru's mother and a son. Still another letter speaks of providing facilities to Guru Gobind Singh in his journey to the Deccan to interview Emperor Aurangzeb.

Tarikh-e-Muazzam Shah (Persian)

This work was compiled by Abdul Rasul in 1708 AD. He gives an account of the death of Guru Gobind Singh's foster-son at Chitor.

Akhbarat-e-Durbar-e-Mualla (Persian)

It is a collection of newsletters issued during the reign of Emperor Bahadur Shah, 1707-1712. They record the grant of a mourning dress to the son of Jamshed Khan Afghan, who had tried to kill Guru Gobind Singh, but was killed in turn by the Guru, and also to Guru Gobind Singh's family on the Guru's death.

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Hukam Namas of Sikh Guru

Guru Hargobind, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh, and Mata Sundari, widow of Guru Gobind Singh addressed a number of letters to their disciples or the *sangats*. They are popularly known as *Hukam Namas*. Many of such *Hukam Namas* have been preserved with reverence by the descendants of those persons whom these letters were addressed. These letters have been recently edited by Dr. Ganda Singh, and published by the Punjabi University, Patiala. Most of these Hukam Namas are dated, while some of them bear Guru's autographs. This conclusively proves the authenticity of these letters. The *Hukam Namas* throw a flood of light on the conditions of the times in which they were written. Many letters of Guru Gobind Singh, for example, testify to the fact that he invited help of men, money and arms from his disciples in order to continue the struggle against the Mughals.

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CHAPTER 22

Guru Gobind Singh Marg

The Panjab Government built the Guru Gobind Singh Marg in the first quarter of 1973, and performed the great pilgrimage (*Mahan Yatra*) from April 10 to 13, 1973. Guru Gobind Singh Marg connected Anandpur Sahib with Damdama Sahib, a distance of 640 kilometres, covering ninety-one historical places and 222 villages. Twenty commemorative pillars were erected on this long route giving a glimpse into the ideals of the Guru. Each pillar is pentagonal in form, made of stone, 9 feet 4 inches in height supported on a 4 feet 3 inches pentagonal base. Everyone of the five sides on the ground level is 24 feet. Every side has five steps, 1 foot 6 inches in height in all. A steel emblem, 1 foot 10 inches high with a double-edged dagger (*khanda*) placed in a *chakra* stands on top. The four sides of the pillars bear compositions of Guru Gobind Singh in their Panjabi, Hindi, English and Urdu versions, while the fifth side gives the historical account connected with that particular area.

Gathering at Chandigarh

The two horses of the pedigree used by the Guru, his sacred weapons and rare relics including two arrows, two iron *chakras*, one *sandal* and one dagger belonging to the Guru were brought from Patna by the head priest of the Gurdwara there. They were given a state reception at Chandigarh on April 9, 1973. Other relics secured from Patiala Maharaja were Guru's special arrows fitted with a 15 gram gold ring. It was intended to defray the cost of the burial or cremation of the person killed by that arrow as a noble gesture of the Guru. The other relics were a muzzle-loading gun on which the sacred invocation to the Goddess Chandi was inscribed in gold, a lance made of rare wood with a silver handle and a sword used by the Guru.

1. Anandpur Sahib

This place was founded by the ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur. Here

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Guru Gobind Singh spent nearly two-thirds of his life. It is the birth-place of the Khalsa in whom the Guru infused martial fervour, and initiated a heroic struggle against fanaticism. For this reason the procession started from Fort Anandgarh and marched to Gurdwara Keshgarh where Panj Piaras were baptised by Guru Gobind Singh nearly half a kilometre distant. In the procession there were 3,000 cars and 100 trucks. The motor-file was 20 kilometres long. A large number of Hindus and nearly 300 Muslims shouting *Allah ho Akbar* participated in the procession. The following verse of Guru Gobind Singh is engraved on the first pillar here :

Some are Hindus, some are Muslims, some are Shias, some are Sunnies, yet men are all one. So must thou recognise them.

2. Kiratpur

Kiratpur was established by the sixth Guru, Hargobind. Here the seventh and eighth Gurus were born. It was at Kiratpur that Guru Gobind Singh came to receive the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur from Bhai Jaita in 1675 AD. The second pillar at this place bears the following verse of the Guru:

The Lord (Guru Tegh Bahadur) protected the *tilak* (sacred mark) and the *janju* (sacred thread) of the Hindus;
A great deed he enacted in this age of darkness.

3. Sarsa River

Here the Guru was attacked at night in December, 1704 in the midst of heavy rain and biting cold by the forces of the Mughals and neighbouring hill rajas. In the confusion the Guru was separated from his family, and escaped with his two elder sons by crossing the swollen river. The third pentagonal pillar was erected at Gurdwara Parivar Bachhora Sahib on the banks of the Bhakra Canal near Ghanauli village. The following verse appears on the pillar here:

Noble are they in this world who cherish
God's name,
As well as the will to fight oppression.

4. Gurdwara Bhatta Sahib near Rupar

Gurdwara Bhatta Sahib at Kotla Nihang near Rupar has the fourth pillar, which bears the following quotation:

We may call him the Creator,
The beneficent, the provider or the merciful,

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Yet it is the same God.
Do not ever be deluded that one is different from the other.

5. Chamkaur Sahib

Here the Guru fought a valiant battle against large hordes of the enemy at the head of forty followers and two of his sons. Only three Sikhs and the Guru managed to escape. All others including his two elder sons laid down their lives at the altar of liberty. The following verse is written on the pillar:

In battle may I fall fighting without fear;
This is the gift I seek from Thee, O Lord!

6. Machhiwara

At this place the Guru disguised himself as a Muslim saint and marched onward undetected by the enemy. The pillar bears the following verse:

Better, far better is the Beloved's straw mattress;
Accurst, accurst is living in palaces without Him.

7. Alamgir

The two Pathans, Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan of Machhiwara, who had escorted the Guru were allowed to return from this place situated 13 km from Ludhiana. About two lakh people paid homage to the Guru at Alamgir. The Guru's following verse is written on the pillar here:

Witnessing His glory do the holy live in bliss,
Witnessing His glory are the malicious subdued.

8. Raekot

From Alamgir to Raekot the procession passed through Jodhan village visited by the Guru. This was the best village in decoration.

Raekot was the capital of Rae Kalha, a newly converted Muslim chief, who received the Guru warmly. As desired by the Guru, the Rae sent his special messenger Nura to Sarhind to bring news about his family members. On hearing the news of the death of his two younger surviving sons and his mother the Guru uttered the following verse which is inscribed on the pillar:

Mortal is this frame unenduring and perishable;
Praise of the Divine is the raft by which is this worldly ocean securely crossed.

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At Tahli Sahib Gurdwara of Raekot a great congregation was held during the march.

9. Takhtupura

The procession passed from Rama village on the border of Faridkot district which was decorated. The Yodha village gave a red carpet reception. The people of Takhtupura village gave food to the processionists. The following words of the Guru have been written on the pillar here:

Make this body the temple of faith,
Illumine it with the candle light of discrimination.

10. Dina-Kangar

Here the Guru stayed for some time and wrote a letter to Aurangzeb called *Zafar Nama* or epistle of victory. One of the verses of this letter has been inscribed on the pillar:

When all other means have failed;
It is but righteous to take up the sword.

11. Dod

The village Dod stands on the border of the region inhabited by Brar Jats. The Guru held a large congregation and preached the cult of the holy sword to protect Dharma. The following lines are written on the pillar at this place:

Hail, hail, to the Creator of the world,
The Saviour of creation,
My Protector,
Hail to Thee, O Sword!

12. Dhilwan Sodhian

The Sodhis of this place were related to the Guru. Here the Guru discarded his Muslim dress of blue colour. The following verse is written on the pillar there:

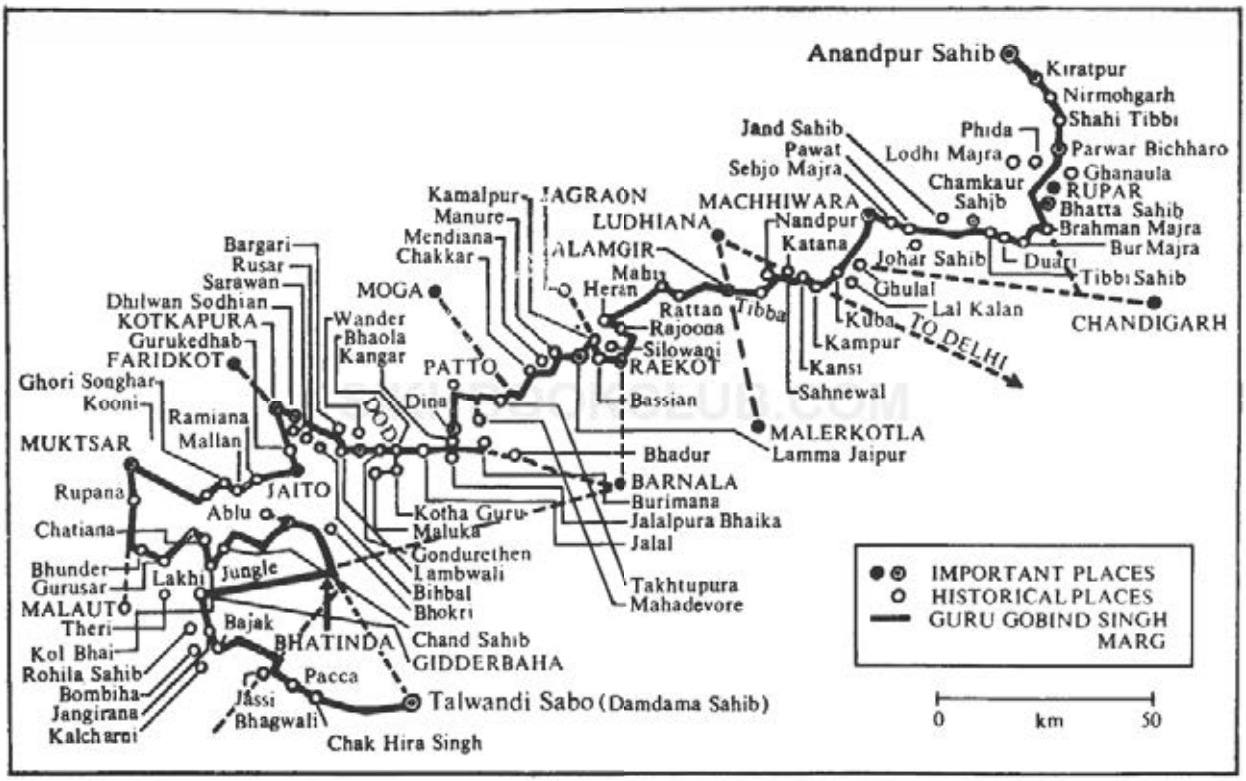
When Light Divine illumines their hearts,
Do the Khalsa realize the perfection of truth.

13. Kot Kapura

This place belonged to Chaudhari Kapura. Guru Gobind Singh wished to use his fort for re-organising his forces. Kapura declined. The following verse is inscribed:

Manly is he who is firm of word,

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Guru Gobind Singh Marg (Anandpur Sahib—Talwandi Sabo) [to face p. 419

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Not he who has one thing in his heart and says another.

14. Jaito

The procession took four hours to pass Jaito. The *marg* passing through Jaito was decorated with paper buntings, flags, lamps. Several welcome gates were erected. Flower petals were showered and scented water sprinkled on the procession. *Doshalas* were presented for the two horses. The following verse from Guru Gobind Singh's *Bachitra Natak* is inscribed on the pillar.

For this purpose was I born,
Know all ye pious people,
To establish righteousness,
To protect those worthy and virtuous,
To overcome and destroy all tyrants.

15. Muktsar

The place was called Khidrane di Dhab. Guru Gobind Singh fought a battle here in which forty deserters from Anandpur sacrificed their lives. It was then called Muktsar or the tank of salvation. The following verse is written on the pillar:

And may I, as my time comes,
Die fighting in battle unrelenting.

16. Gurusar

At this place Guru's own followers mostly Brar Jats compelled the Guru to make payments of their dues. The following lines are inscribed on the pillar:

Ever since I have to Thy feet attached myself, O Lord!
None other since then have I acknowledged.

17. Lakhisar

Guru Gobind Singh reached here after blessing the village of Mahma Swai, the village of Bhai Dan Singh. There a large number of Sikhs came to meet the Guru. The following verses are written on the pillar:

To Lakhi Jungle repaired the Khalsa,
Resistless was the friend's call.
They paused not for food or drink,
One waited not for another,
Such eagerness swayed their hearts,

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Erased was separation;
Union prevailed,
Overwhelming was their gratefulness.

18. Jassi Bagwali

This place belonged to the Guru's two most devoted followers, Bhai Sukhu and Bhai Budhu. The pillar bears the following verse:

Truly I speak,
Listen, ye all,
He who loveth findeth the Lord.

19. Chak Hira Singh

Here a large number of persons became Singhs of the Guru. The following verse is written on the pillar:

By the blessing of the Khalsa am I exalted;
Millions like me do otherwise in humbleness abide.

20. Damdama Sahib

The Guru spent nine months at this village called *Sabo ki Talwandi*. Here the *Dasam Granth* was compiled. The place was named Damdama by the Guru. The Guru Gobind Singh Marg Mahan Yatra concluded here on April 13 in the same formation as it began at Anandpur on April 10. Two decorated elephants on which drum-beaters were seated led the procession. The procession marched on foot for about two kilometres to Gurdwara Damdama Sahib. The following inscription is written on the pillar:

To them, the Khalsa, does belong all, my home and my body, my mind and my head, and all I possess.

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CHAPTER 23

Impact of Sikh Gurus on Society

The Sikh Gurus had an extraordinary influence on the various strata of society. They provided vital leadership to the down-trodden and suppressed people. Their contribution in spiritual, moral, social, economic, cultural and political fields was striking and remarkable. They placed simple but high ideals before the people at a time when superstition, fanaticism and despair reigned supreme everywhere. They removed false beliefs and fear from the minds of men and women and held out before them the prospects of hope, confidence, peace and salvation.

During the Guru period there were only two religions in the Panjab-Hinduism and Islam. Buddhism had disappeared long ago. Only a few followers of Jainism could be seen in Haryana. The rulers of the country were Muslims and Hindus were the subject people. Deep hatred and bitter antagonism existed between the two religions. The Hindus suffered from triple oppression—by foreign rulers, by invaders, and by alien settlers. The Hindus and Muslims were completely separated from each other—religiously, socially, economically, culturally and politically.

1. Impact on Religious Thought

(*a*) *Reformation of Hindu society*

Nanak's religion was for all. He wanted to root out the hatred existing between the rulers and the ruled. As the Muslims persecuted Hindus on account of idolatry and caste system, Nanak preached against both these institutions. He declared there was only one God, and all human beings were His children. Thus he preached the principle of fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. The Gurus addressed their followers as Bhai, Bhai Mardana, Bhai-Bala, Bhai Budha, Bhai Lahna. Guru Tegh Bahadur, while writing to a *sangat*, mentioned every member by name even when the number was 50, 60 or 70,

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calling every male member Bhai and every woman as Bebe.

The Gurus asserted it did not matter if God was called Allah or Khuda by Muslims, and Ram or Parmeshwar by Hindus. Father, daddy and papa meant the same person. The real test lay not in belief but in action. Both Qurān and Puran taught love of humanity. He emphasized that in the eyes of God there was no person high or low superior or inferior, big or small, rich or poor. Nanak admitted lower caste Hindus along with men of upper classes in his congregations. He preached in Panjabi, the language of the common people, in witty prose and pithy poetry. He insisted on singing sacred songs or hymns in the sincerest devotion and love for God. The spirit of self-surrender to the Lord and exercising no will of one's own was prescribed for all seekers of peace of mind. All useless formalities and rituals were completely discarded. He roamed all over the country preaching to the people at village well, under a shady tree where people rested in the afternoon, at fairs and festivals, at places of pilgrimage, and on occasions of marriages and mournings.

Nanak stimulated the people to get rid of priesthood, polytheism and caste system. He offered consolation by preaching that their misfortunes were due to their misdeeds in the past life, and assured them that a good life would bring them salvation hereafter.

(*b*) *Fraternity with Muslims*

The Sikh Gurus attempted to remove bitterness prevailing between Hinduism and Islam both by precept and practice. Guru Nanak's life-companion was Mardana. He died at Baghdad and the Guru performed his obsequies with his own hands, and erected a memorial over his grave. Then Mardana's son Shahzada was employed to sing holy songs. Guru Angad recruited Satta and Balwand, two Muslim minstrels, to sing sacred hymns at the time of worship. Guru Arjan got the foundation-stone of Hari Mandar laid at Amritsar by the celebrated Muslim saint, Mian Mir of Lahore. He included in the Adi Granth, the holy scripture of Sikhism, hymns of Muslim saints and minstrels as follows:

Kabir 541, Farid 134, Mardana 3, Satta and Balwand who sang jointly 3.

Guru Hargobind employed in his service a large number of Pathans under command of Paindah Khan. Pir Budhu Shah of Sadhaura gave to Guru Gobind Singh 700 of his disciples in command of his four sons, two of whom were killed in the battle of Bhangani in 1688. In

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the battle of Anandpur in 1702 Mir Beg and Mamun Khan commanded Guru's forces. Again at the same place in 1704 General Sayyid Beg did not like to fight an unholy war against the Guru and went over to his side. Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan of Machhiwara helped Guru Gobind Singh in escaping towards Malwa desert. Qazi Pir Muhammad saved Guru's life by falsely declaring that he was a Muslim saint known to him. Rae Kalha, a Muslim chief of Raekot, entertained him generously during the Guru's flight. Thus it is clear that the Sikh Gurus reduced communal tension in the Panjab.

(*c*) *Salvation through repetition of God's Name*

God of the Sikh Gurus is *nirgun* or absolute as well as *sagun* or personal. As absolute, He is present in everything and everywhere. As personal, He listens to one's grievances and helps him:

"He lives in everything. He dwells in every heart. Yet he is not blended with anything. He is *separate*."[1]

Salvation could be obtained by one and all by constantly and attentively repeating the Name of God. Guru Ram Das said:

"Let anybody repeat Hari Mantra worthy to be repeated, be he a Kshatriya, a Brahman, a Shudra or a Vaish."[2]

Guru Arjan declared: "Through one Name all will be saved—the Kshatriya, the Brahman, the Shudra and the Vaish."[3]

The mode of the worship of the Sikhs consists in singing hymns from the Adi Granth to the accompaniment of musical instruments. This manner of worship has remained unchanged through centuries. Sujan Rae Bhandari of Batala, a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh, wrote in 1697:

"The mode of worship of this sect is to recite hymns composed by their Gurus and sing them softly and sweetly in a fascinating manner."[4]

(*d*) *Congregations*

Hinduism was based on individualism. It did not develop spirit of unity. It was for this reason that Muslim invaders easily overpowered Hindu armies, which had no unified command. The Bhakti leaders

[1] *Jaitari ki Var*, Mohalla V.
[2] *Adi Granth*, Bilawal, Mohalla IV.
[3] ibid, Maru, Mohalla V.
[4] *Khulasat-ut-Twarikh*, Persian, 70.

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insisted on congregational system. The Sikh Gurus adopted the same practice.

Sangats or congregations were religious assemblies. Every Sikh-man, woman and child—was a member of one sangat or the other. The sangats served as a link between the common people and the Gurus. Guru Nanak established a *dharamsal* or a Sikh place of worship wherever he went.[1]

Guru Angad maintained the purity of the sangat by declining to associate Udasis with the Sikhs. Guru Amar Das organised them into twenty-two dioceses under Sangatias. Their status was raised by Guru Arjan to that of Masands. In the Sangat all the four castes were blended like the betel leaf. Bhai Gurdas said:

Chār varan satsang Gurmukh melya
Jān tambol rang Gurmukh chelya.[2]

Guru Hargobind introduced congregational prayers. Mohsin Fani says when a Sikh desired for something, he would request the sangat to pray for him. Even the Guru himself asked the Sikh congregation (*Sangat or Anjuman-e-Sikhan*) to pray for him.[3]

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2. Impact on Social Life

(a) *Caste system*

The Hindu society was based on caste and was divided into countless water-tight compartments. Hinduism consisted of four castes. About one-third of the total number included Shudras. The three-upper classes considered Shudras inferior. They were required to perform menial jobs for them. Men were considered high and low on account of their birth and not according to their deeds. Equality of human beings was a dream. The Gurus preached that a man's love of God should be the criterion to judge whether he was good or bad, high or low. As the caste system was not based on divine love, they condemned it. They aimed at creating a casteless and classless society. Guru Ram Das stated:

"There are four castes-Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Shudras and Vaishas-and there are four Ashrams. Of all these the foremost is one which meditates on the Lord. As a castor tree growing near a sandalwood

[1]Bhai Gurdas, Var I, Pauri 27.
[2]Var 3, Pauri 16.
[3]*The Dabistan*, Persian, 239.

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tree absorbs its perfume, so does a degraded person become acceptable by attending religious congregations. The highest and purest of all is he whose mind dwells in the Lord. Nanak! I wash the feet of that devotee of God who serves the low castes."

Guru Arjan gave four gates to Hari Mandar at Amritsar indicating that the Sikh temples were open to all the four castes.

Bhai Gurdas, the scribe of the Adi Granth, testifies to the effect produced by the Guru's teachings on caste system:

Chār varan ik varan hoe,
Gur Sikh waryan Gurmukh gote.

[All four castes have become one. All disciples of the Guru belong to the Gurmukh caste.[1]]

(*b*) *The Langar*

The Sikh Gurus denounced the practice of dining within a square (*chauka*) in the kitchen by the three upper castes. It developed spirit of exclusiveness and isolation which could not make the people a nation. Guru Nanak started the langar system which was rigidly enforced by his successors. All the visitors belonging to any caste had to dine in the community mess or langar. There a Brahman sat by the side of a barber or washerman, and ate the same food prepared and served even by Shudras. This led to the amalgamation of all the castes into one class.

(c) The sacred thread

The sacred thread created superior and inferior classes as Shudras were debarred from its use. Guru Nanak opposed it vehemently. The Gurus and their Sikhs discarded it.

(*d*) *Spirit of fellow-feeling*

Guru Amar Das invited all his followers with their families to gather in a general body twice a year on the days of Baisakhi and Diwali in March-April and October-November. It enabled them to fraternise with one another, and greatly developed the spirit of fellow-feeling. This practice was continued under the later Gurus. It is still followed with the same enthusiasm.

[1]Var 29, Pauri 5.

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(*e*) *Spirit of service*

The Gurus placed before their Sikhs the ideal of service and sacrifice. Guru Nanak in Sri Rag says : "The service of mankind is a warrant to heaven." The Gurus developed spirit of service among the Sikhs who rendered free labour in digging wells and tanks and contributed money and material. Guru Amar Das constructed at Goindwal a well (*baoli*) in which water was approached by 84 steps. Guru Ram Das dug a tank called Amritsar. He started construction of another tank known as Santokhsar. Guru Arjan completed it in 1588. In 1590 he laid out another big tank, 24 kms south of Amritsar, and named it Taran Tāran. Sixty-six kms to the east of Amritsar he dug another tank called Gangasar, where a new township called Kartarpur developed. He built a (*baoli*) at Lahore. At Wadali, 7 kms from Amritsar the Guru dug a big well which was worked by six Persian wheels. The place came to be known as Chheharta.

(*f*) *The dignity af manual labour*

The dignity of manual labour was raised to a high pedestal. Nanak worked as a cultivator at Kartarpur. Angad carried heavy loads of grass on his head while in attendance upon Guru Nanak. Amar Das at Khadur daily brought a pitcher of water from river Beas, 5 kms distant, for Guru Angad's bath. Ram Das carried baskets of earth on his head when the (*baoli*) at Goindwal was under construction. Guru Arjan's Sikhs gave free labour in digging various tanks. The Sikhs worked gratis in the langar in fetching fuelwood and water, cooking, cleansing utensils, sweeping floor and in serving food.[1]

(*g*) *Charity*

Giving away something in the service of others was a necessary part of a Sikh's life. He was expected to make offerings to the local langar, Guru-ka-langar at the headquarters, for construction of a gurdwara or a tank and to help the needy. The Gurus insisted that one should earn one's living by the sweat of one's brow. Guru Ram Das, the fourth Guru, instructed the Sikhs to serve other Sikhs wherever possible with money and material. He specially asked them to serve travellers with food and drink.[2] The fifth Guru, Arjan, made it a rule that every Sikh must contribute one-tenth of his earnings in the service of the community. This practice continued under the later

[1]*The Dabistan*, 238.
[2]Suhi, IV.

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Gurus. It still exists to a certain extent purely on a voluntary basis.

(*h*) *Women*

During the Muslim rule Hindu women suffered the most. Beautiful girls were not safe from the lust of the rulers and their officials. The Hindus resorted to infanticide, child marriage, *purdah* and *sati*. Girls were denied good living conditions so that they should not develop youthfulness and beauty. They occupied almost a degraded position in the home. The birth of a girl was considered a misfortune.

The Sikh Gurus tried to uplift them to a status even higher than in Christianity and Islam. In Christianity a woman could not be a preacher from the pulpit. In Islam a woman could not invite the faithful to prayers in a mosque by Bāng or Azan, nor could she lead a congregation in prayer, Guru Nanak allowed them to attend sermons along with men. As they kept their heads covered with a piece of cloth, it was made obligatory for men also to attend a congregation with covered heads. They could n; the hymns along with men and were to sit with faces uncovered like men. The third Guru, Amar Das, appointed women in charge of *manjis* and *pirhis* or heads of sangats, big or small. He condemned the practice of *Sati* or self immolation of widows on the funeral pyres of their dead husbands. He declared : She is the true sati whom grief, not fire consumes. He also denounced purdah or covering th r faces in the presence of older members of the family. The sixth Guru, Hargobind, declared that the woman was the conscience of man. Women cooked food in the langar, and served meals with men to the pangat.

They received baptism in the same way as men and enjoyed equal rights. Mai Bhago, a brave Sikh woman, raised a body of men, including the forty deserters from Anandpur, and fought bravely in the battle of Khidrana (Muktsar) on the side of Guru Gobind Singh.

3. Impact on Economic Life

Before Guru Arjan, the Sikhs chiefly consisted of poor agriculturists, artisans, and petty village shopkeepers. Guru Arjan realised that his disciples should not be an unthinking and unadventurous class of people. He encouraged them to take to trade, particularly in horses, in addition to agriculture.

Guru Nanak had defied the traditional restriction of not crossing river Indus and stopping at Attock to save the purity of caste and creed from pollution, by travelling in Muslim countries. He journeyed in

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Arabia, Iraq, Khorasan, Iran and Afghanistan. Guru Arjan advised his Sikhs to imbibe the spirit of adventure by travelling abroad in Central Asia and West Asia, and bring horses of the finest breed for sale in India. This made the Sikhs enterprising, fearless, free from caste prejudices and rich. They became good horsemen and formed the nucleus of the Guru's military power. The contemporary author of the *Dabistan-e-Mazahib* writes :

"Some of the Sikh Gurus take to agriculture and others to trade."[1]

There were numerous obstacles in the way of commerce during the Mughal period which coincided with the age of Sikh Gurus. The roads were very unsafe, and thieves and robbers infested them. William Finch, an English traveller during the time of Guru Arjan, described the road from Delhi to Karnal as "thievish". The Dutch traveller De Laet wrote in 1631, the time of the sixth Guru, Har Gobind, that the road from Lahore to Kabul was infested by Pathan brigands and the travellers were frequently robbed by them.[2] Hawkins wrote in Jahangir's time or the period of the sixth Guru : "The country is so full of thieves and outlaws that almost a man cannot stir out of doors."[3]

4. Impact on Political Consciousness

For about five hundred years upto the advent of Guru Nanak, successive hordes of invaders from across the north-west frontier had poured into India. About sixty foreign invasions had taken place till then. Besides, a continuous stream of Turks and Afghans came throughout the year in tens and twenties. They came here in search of bread and settled down as permanent inhabitants in the rich and fertile parts of this country by ousting the original owners. There was no check at the ingress on the frontier. The rulers governed mercilessly through fear and force alone.

The Sikh Gurus provided leadership to the down-trodden Hindus of Panjab. They offered physical resistance to injustice and tyranny. Guru Nanak cried out against their oppression. Guru Hargobind was involved in a number of engagements with the imperial troops. He

[1] *The Dabistan*, 233.

[2] *Empire of the Great Mogul*, a translation of De Laet's Description of India and fragments of Indian History, by J. S. Hoyland, and annotated by S. N. Banerjee. New Delhi, 1974, pp. 51, 55.

[3] Moreland, W. H., *India at the Death of Akbar*, 46.

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tried to change the old mentality of Hindus of offering only passive resistance to the oppressor. After six hundred years of slavery he attempted to awaken his fellow-countrymen to the realisation that irrespective of consequences, the people should rise against a cruel government to get their wrongs redressed.

Aurangzeb had resolved to establish a purely Islamic state in India and to eliminate Hinduism altogether. Guru Tegh Bahadur was at this time in Assam. On hearing this news he immediately rushed to Panjab. In order to hearten Hindus and his disciples he undertook a couple of tours of East Panjab telling them to keep up their spirits.

Guru Gobind Singh declared that the emperor who endeavoured to control the mind of the people was a tyrant, and who tamely submitted were slaves. In 1699 the Guru created Khalsa, the unpaid national army consisting of his devoted followers. It marked the beginning of a new class of fighters for freedom. Under the guidance of the Guru the Khalsa took up the profession of arms and the results were surprising. These people, the lowliest of the low, who had lived for centuries under complete servility, now turned into valiant warriors, reckless of danger.

The Guru taught the people to look upon misfortunes as a part of the game and laugh at threat, danger, defeat and adversity. In consequence his followers maintained a fine spirit of humour and optimism in times of trials and tribulations. For example, death was termed an expedition to the next world. An iron vessel was called the golden cup. To be punished at Akal Takht was named as getting one's reward and salary. A blind man was an argus-eyed hero. A deaf person was a resident of the upper storey. A hungry man was mad with prosperity. Parched grams were almonds, and onions were silver pieces. A rupee was *damra* or a piece of copper or a paisa. One person declared himself a host of one lakh and a quarter. A sword was the goddess of wisdom and heroism. A thick stick was a lawyer.

The Sikh Gurus tried to create national unity. They rejected caste system which was a great obstacle in the way of making Hindus a united people. They awakened womanhood and encouraged them to work side by side with men. It not only doubled the strength of the nation but also added sweetness and colour to the life of both men and women. Guru Gobind Singh created national literature. Most of his characters in literature appeared before readers as soldiers and generals. The battles exhibited nothing but bravery and glory of the virtuous fighters. In the national wars women and children fought spiri-

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tedly side by side with men. People of all castes and classes participated in the struggle. The spirit of self-sacrifice and single-minded devotion pervaded the whole literature. Guru Gobind Singh was the real originator of nationalism in the Land of Five Rivers.

5. Impact on Individual Character

(*a*) *Four fold process*

The Sikh Gurus taught that the individual progress was a four fold process: by developing body, mind, social consciousness and spirituality. (i) The body must be kept in good health. Guru Amar Das laid great emphasis on physical fitness of his disciples. He declared that human beings were created in the image of God. The human body was Lord's temple. It was the duty of his Sikhs to keep body quite fit to the last. It was a precious gift of God and must not be spoilt by bad habits. He condemned torturing of the body. (ii) Mind was to be kept healthy by banishing selfish thoughts, feelings of jealousy and vindictiveness, and by cherishing ideas of hope, confidence, faith, happiness and service of others.

In Sri Rag Guru Nanak says:

Nanak! life becomes most useful when we are in the company of great men who behave with humility and gentleness.

(iii) The Sikhs called one another *bhai* or brother, and tried their level best to be useful to others. This is how social consciousness was developed. (iv) Spiritual development implied unison with the Divine. Meet the Master Architect within, and get hold of unlimited treasures for a better, higher and nobler living.

(*b*) *Mastery overself*

Another lesson imparted by Gurus was that the real triumph lay in man's mastery over self. We must know that we have a certain purpose in life, and it must be fulfilled. This belief in purpose and action would work miracles. Our faith would hammer out our destiny on the anvil of courage and persistence, and the will to plan and to do. There was no limit to our progress. The limitation lay in our mind alone. Guru Tegh Bahadur said.

Man ke hāre hār hai Bābā
Man ke jite jit.
(It is the mind alone which brings about victory or defeat).

The Gurus declared that human failure resulted not from material

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disadvantages, but from the defects of character. It was explained that fate and destiny were in our own hands. We could transform our lives by our own efforts.

(*c*) *Creative dreaming*

The first five Gurus laid stress on obtaining spiritual liberty. The following five Gurus held that spiritual freedom was not possible without political liberty. Their creative dreaming broke the bondage of tyranny and led men from autocracy to democracy. It was pointed out that creative dreaming was a divine force, and was responsible for all human progress and evolution. Dig through the stony rock of despair, disaster and defeat, and you would find the gold of gladness lying underneath. God would judge us not by our riches, rank or renown, but by our scars sustained in the struggle for securing happiness for ourselves as well as of others.

Why Jats became followers of Khatri Gurus

Several factors were responsible for making Hindu Jats embrace Sikhism.

1. Petty traders in Cis-Satluj region were Agarwals, in Shivalik Hills Mahajans, in southern Panjab Aroras, and in Central and West Panjab Khatris. Sir George Campbell who served as a deputy commissioner in the Panjab in forties of the nineteenth century calls Khatris "a very superior people." They were fair in dealings and sympathetic to their customers. The Jats of Majha liked them.

2. The Khatris were the roving teachers going from village to village and teaching in a village for sometime free of charge only for free board and lodging. Jat boys were their pupils.

3. The first five Gurus concentrated on Majha, the real homeland of Jats. Nanak lived at Kartarpur, Angad at Khadur, Amar Das at Goindwal, Ram Das at Amritsar, Arjan at Amritsar and Taran Tāran; while Hargobind lived in Majha and Malwa both. The last four Gurus focussed their attention on Malwa, another native land of Jats. They won the hearts of Majhail and Malwai Jat peasantry.

4. The Gurus emphasized equality for all. The equality of Jats, the lower class Vaish, with the two upper classes of Khatris and Brahmans, considerably raised their social status. Mohsin Fani says that Brahmans and Khatris served under Jats as the senior masands of Gurus were Jats. Therefore the Jats of Majha and Malwa joined Sikhism.

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5. The building of tanks and wells in places where scarcity of water prevailed made the Gurus popular with peasantry most of whom were Jats. Guru Tegh Bahadur supplied milch cattle to the poor and needy cultivators.

6. Emperor Akbar's policy of religious toleration and liberalism was one of the main causes of conversion of Jats to Sikhism. Akbar visited Guru Amar Das at Goindwal, dined in the langar, listened to the Guru's sermon and granted land where now stands Amritsar. This led to the popularity of Sikh religion.

Emperor Akbar visited Goindwal a second time to meet Guru Arjan. At Guru's request he remitted land revenue for a year from Majha zamindars. As Jats were the small landholders in Majha, they joined Sikhism in large numbers.

7. Guru Hargobind's supervisory powers in Majha and Malwa, granted by Jahangir, raised the prestige of Sikh Gurus greatly. The Guru's formation of a small Sikh army and his battles against the Mughals filled the Jats of Majha and Malwa with warlike enthusiasm and they joined its ranks with great joy and cheer.

8. Their simple philosophy of repetition of God's Name for the solution of the people's daily problems and salvation after death had a great appeal to the plain, homely Jats.

9. According to the contemporary Mohsin Fani, the majority of Guru Arjan's masands were Jats. Their office became hereditary. The Jat peasantry took to Sikhism under their influence and persuasion.

10. It is a well-known fact that the virile Jats had a larger number of boys than girls. So a fairly large number of Jat young men remained without a wife. The Sikh Gurus abolished caste system and permitted their followers to marry a girl or a widow of any caste or class. This offered a great temptation to the Jats, mainly of poor families. Having married a low caste woman, may be a cobbler or a sweeper or of a wandering tribe, they retained their social status in the Sikh religion. Marrying a brother's widow became an established custom with them, which the higher classes of Hinduism did not permit.

11. By nature and temperament a Jat is aggressive. The reason is that he earned his living by forcing soil to yield through aggression. This factor was fully realised by Guru Gobind Singh. He directed their energy into military field. There the Jats shone at their best. As soldiers they were as happy as a fish in water. In this new profession they gave up the role of a Bhai and assumed the title of a Sardar This dignified status mightily drew them towards Sikh religion.

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12. During their war of independence, first under Banda Bahadur and later under the misls, the Sikhs displayed great stamina and perseverance. Their spirit of adventure and bravery won them pelf and power in abundance. This inspired the Village Hindu young men to follow their example. They could join the misls after getting baptism. Hence every village in Majha, Doaba and Malwa made its contribution to the Sikh ranks as best as it could.

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